

P R E F A C E.

THE Public will readily see that this Comedy is an alteration from the "*Scornful Lady*" of Beaumont and Fletcher; names that stand too high in dramatic fame to need any eulogium here. In respect to the alterations, they will be best judged of by a comparison of the two plays: all becoming me to say of them, is, that I have availed myself of the remarks made on the original by Dryden, and some of the first Critics in the beginning of the present century, according to the best of my abilities.

But whilst I yielded to the necessity of lopping off a number of *indelicacies* and *coarse allusions*, which the morals of no age ought to bear, I felt some difficulty in complying with the *rigidity of our modern School of politeness*, as by it I found I must give up some part of the wit and humour of the Comedy: however, 'tis perhaps the more prudent part of a Dramatic Writer to *follow*, rather than attempt to *lead* the manners of his time; and prescribing myself this rule, I trust I shall stand excusable (whatever my other defects may be) from letting one expression stand which may give offence to the chastest ear.

In respect to the performers, I should feel myself deficient in common gratitude, were I to send this Comedy into the world without acknowledging my very singular obligations to them.

To Mrs. ABINGTON I principally owe every degree of applause with which this piece has been honoured, as it was this lady (who combines an excellent understanding and great dramatic knowledge with her well-known theatrical talents) who first suggested to me the idea of an alteration; and the success has fully justified her opinion.--- Her judgement did not rest here, but displayed itself more fully in the representation of the heroine, in which she discriminated a number of contending passions with an *ease of manners* and *delicacy of colouring*, as, if possible, have added to that reputation which has so justly placed her at the head of the comic line.

Mr.

P R E F A C E.

Mr. WROUGHTON conceived and executed the part of the *Elder Loveless* in the true spirit of the writing. In many places he even did more; like a skilful painter, choosing the most favourable situations to set off and embellish the portrait. Mr. LEWIS likewise not only did every degree of justice to his part, but shewed an attention in getting up the Comedy, that does him credit as a Deputy-Manager. In short, my thanks are due to the whole of the performers, who exerted themselves in such a manner, as to hold out a pleasing assurance to every author, that his talents will be well supported in their hands.

I lastly beg leave to make my Acknowledgements to the PUBLIC for their very flattering and *uninfluenced* approbation, as by it they not only gave a pleasing proof, they still retain a proper relish for *strong character* and good *old English humour*, but that they think the *Drama*, like the Constitution, must be occasionally brought back to its original principles, to guard against the innovations of *frivolity* and a *false taste*.

P R O L O G U E.

P R O L O G U E,

Written by the A U T H O R,

S P O K E N B Y

Mr. L E E L E W E S.

TO-NIGHT from BEAUMONT and from FLETCHER's
pen

(Who on the Critic 'Change were held *good men*)
We bring a Fair-one, who, against her quiet,
Will hourly on the man she doats run riot;
Will set him tasks, and keep so strange a carriage,
That tho' she means to wed him—shrinks from marriage.
What strange *caprice*! Is this in Nature so?
Or only fancied many years ago?
Our Bard the former says.—Let's try his rule:
The World is all before us for our School.

Behold SQUATILLA, buxom, round, and fair,
Just four-feet high---or rather four feet square!
Nature, her inclination, and her ease,
Say to SQUATILLA, "Use the four-wheel'd chaise!"
Caprice says, "No; but bids her be *the thing*!
Bestride her poney, and race round the ring."
Up goes her hair in club---her hat all feather-----
Her jockey dress---her gloves---nay, *boots of leather*:
And whilst she helter-skelter drives along,
Her sides all mummy, and her breath just gone,
All this and more with fortitude she'll bear,
Because 'tis fashion, and the people stare.

Nor are the Lordlings of our sex more wise;
From folly oft they draw the self-same prize.
His talents mark, how PROBUS well rewards!
His life a sacrifice to dice and cards!
PROBUS, whose qualities the best might please,
Form'd to converse---to live---and write with ease.
Yet midst the *Rooks* and *Pigeons* of all hours
Behold him spend his fortune and his powers!
Not that he's pleas'd---but lest some fool should say---
(*raising his glass*)—"Who is this PROBUS pray!
"Is he of *Brookes's*?—Does he keep a stable?
"I never see him at our *Faro* table.

"Perhaps

P R O L O G U E.

“ Perhaps some College Soph of *Somnus*’ Hall!—

“ O yes,—’tis so---he’s No-body at all.”

In short, examine Nature in the piece,
What crowds are hobby-hors’d upon *Caprice*!

As if, my doctrine further to advance,
Le PICQ should sing, and PACCHIEROTTI dance!

Or, what would just turn out as great a *bore*,
Your *Humble* *Servant* should attempt *Jane Shore*.

Yet tho’ this foible taints the general race,
Our Author hopes ’tis banish’d from this place:
For tho’ no *forc’d conceits* support his cause,
No *splendid scenes* or *dresses* court applause,
Of Bards your Sires have pleas’d, judge not in haste,
But add *good-nature* to their *sense* and *taste*.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Elder Loveless, (<i>Suitor to the Lady</i>)	Mr. Wroughton.	
Younger Loveless, (<i>a Prodigal</i>)	Mr. Lewis.	
Savil, (<i>Steward to E. Loveless</i>)	Mr. Quick.	
Welford, (<i>a Suitor to the Lady</i>)	Mr. Lee Lewes.	
Captain,	{	Mr. Mahon,
Traveller,		Mr. Davies.
Poet,		Mr. Wewitzer.
Morecraft, (<i>an Urrer</i>)		Mr. Wilson.
Servant, (<i>to Welford</i>)		Mr. Fearon.
Ditto, (<i>to Loveless</i>)		Mr. Helme.

W O M E N.

Lady, }	{	(Sisters)	Mrs. Abington.
Martha,			Mrs. Lewis.
Abigail, (<i>Waiting-Woman to the Lady</i>)			Mrs. Webb.
Widow,			Mrs. Morton.

Attendants, &c.

S C E N E, L O N D O N.

T H E

THE
CAPRICIOUS LADY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Anti-Chamber in the LADY'S House.

Enter ELDER LOVELESS, YOUNG LOVELESS, and SAVIL.

E. Lov. **B**ROTHER, is your last hope past, to mollify
Morecraft's heart about your mortgage?

Y. Lov. I am past all hope. I have presented the
usurer with a richer draught than ever *Cleopatra* swallowed.
He hath suck'd in ten thousand pounds-worth of my land
more than he paid for at a gulp.

E. Lov. And I have as hard a task to perform in this
house.

Y. Lov. 'Faith, mine was to make an usurer honest, or
to lose my land.

E. Lov. And mine, to prevail on an obstinate woman,
or to leave the land.—Make the boat stay. I fear I shall
begin my unfortunate journey this night, though its dark-
ness, and the roughness of the waters, might easily dis-
suade an unwilling man.

Sav. Sir, your father's old friends hold it the sounder
course, both for your body and estate, to stay at home,
and marry, and have children, and govern in your country,
than to travel, and die without issue.

B

E. Lov.

2 THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

E. Lov. *Savil*, however my intents succeed, you shall gain the opinion of a better servant, in seeking to execute, not alter, my will.

Y. Lov. O, yonder's Mrs. *Abigail*, brother, your mistress's maid; but no more like her mistress, than an ice-house is to a barrel of gunpowder: and why she keeps her I cannot imagine, except by way of penance for her own prudery.

Enter ABIGAIL.

E. Lov. Well, Mrs. *Abigail*!

Abig. Master *Lovelfs*, truly we thought your sails had been hoisted, Sir; my mistress is persuaded you are sea-sick by this.

E. Lov. Keeps she still her ill taken-up resolution? Didst thou move her for me?

Abig. By this light that shines, there's no removing her, if she get a stiff opinion by the end. I attempted her to-day, when they say a woman can deny nothing.

E. Lov. What critical minute was that?

Abig. Marry, it was at her toilet, when her glass and her vanity had subdued her anger, and put her in good humour with all the world.

E. Lov. I prithee deliver my best services to her, and say, I desire to see the dear cause of my banishment, and then for France.

Abig. I'll do't.—Harkee! Is that your brother?

E. Lov. Yes—have you lost your memory?

Abig. As I live, he's a pretty fellow! (*she looks wishfully at him*) [Exit.

Y. Lov. God-a-mercy, Fifty!

E. Lov. Why, she knows you not?

Y. Lov. No; but she has no objection to my knowing her. She loves youth of eighteen with as much avidity as a girl of sixteen. She loved all the players in the last reign once over. She was struck when they acted lovers, and forsook them when they played murderers: in short, she is a pleasurer on the truest principle, and thinks no time of life should preclude a woman from enjoyment.

E. Lov. Enough, I know her, brother. I shall delay you only to salute my mistress, and take leave. We will part at the stairs.

Enter

Enter LADY and ABIGAIL.

Lady. Now, Sir, the first part of your will is performed, what's the rest?

E. Lov. First, let me beg your notice for this gentleman, my brother.

Lady. I shall take it as a favour done me.

Y. Lov. Lady, my salutations crave acquaintance and leave at once. [*Exeunt Young Loveless and Savil.*]

Lady. Sir, I hope you are master of your own time?

E. Lov. Would I were so, Madam! for me to praise over again that worth which all the world and you yourself can see.

Lady. 'Tis a cold room this, Sir!

E. Lov. Madam! —

Lady. What think you if I have a chimney broken out here?

E. Lov. Madam, another in my place, that were not tied to believe all your actions just, would apprehend himself wrong'd:—but I, whose virtues are constancy and obedience—

Lady. *Abigail*, make a good fire to warm me after this Gentleman's exordiums.

E. Lov. I have heard and seen your affability to be such, that the servants you give wages to may speak.

Lady. Very true, Sir; but then they speak to the purpose.

E. Lov. Madam, your will leads my speeches from the purpose: but, as a man,—

Lady. What, a simile too!—Lord, Sir, this room was built for honest meaners, that deliver themselves hastily and plainly, and are gone. Is this a time for exordiums and similes? If you have aught to say, break into it at once; my answers shall very reasonably meet you.

E. Lov. Madam, I came to see you.

Lady. Happily dispatch'd!—The next?

E. Lov. To take my leave of you.

Lady. What, to be gone?

E. Lov. Yes.

Lady. Lord, you need not have despair'd of that, nor have used so many circumstances to win me to give you leave to perform my own commands.—Is there a third?

E. Lov. Yes; I had a third, had you been apt to hear it.

THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

Lady. O never apter!—Fast, good Sir, fast!

E. Lov. 'Twas to intreat you to hear reason.

Lady. Most willingly.—Have you brought one can speak it?

E. Lov. Lastly, it is to kindle in that barren heart love and forgiveness.

Lady. What, you would stay at home?

E. Lov. Yes, Lady.

Lady. Why so you may, and doubtless will, when you have debated that your commander is but your mistress—a woman—a weak one—wildly overborne with passions; and then the thing commanded is so terrible, that you see Dover's dreadful cliff—passing in a poor water-house the danger of the merciless Channel—'twixt that and Calais five long hours sail, with three poor weeks victuals.

E. Lov. You wrong me!

Lady. Then to land dumb, unable to enquire for an English host—to remove from city to city, by most chargeable post-horses, like one that rode in quest of his mother-tongue.

E. Lov. You wrong me much; you know your least word is of force to make me seek out dangers.—Move me, then, not with toys; but in this banishment I must take leave to say, you are unjust.—Was one kiss forced from you in public so unpardonable? Why, all the hours of day and night have seen us kisses.

Lady. True; and so you told the company that heard me chide.

E. Lov. Your own eyes were not dearer to you than I.

Lady. And so you told them.

E. Lov. I did; yet no sign of disgrace need have stained your cheek. You yourself knew your pure and simple heart to be most unspotted, and free from the least baseness.

Lady. I did; but if a maid's heart doth but once think she is suspected, her own face will write her guilty.

E. Lov. But where lay this disgrace? The world, that knew us, knew our resolutions well; and could it be expected I should give away my freedom, and venture a perpetual bondage with one I never kiss'd? or could I in strict wisdom take too much love upon me from her that chose me for her husband?

Lady. Believe me, if my wedding-cloaths were on—the gloves bought and given—the licence come—my bride-

maids

THE
CAPRICIOUS LADY:

CHP
A
C O M E D Y,

(ALTERED FROM
BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER)

As it is now PERFORMING at the
NEW THEATRE-ROYAL,

I N
C O V E N T - G A R D E N.

Cooke
Hoc amat, hoc spernat——
HOR. DE ART. POET.

L O N D O N:

Printed for C. DILLY, in the Poultry.

M.DCC.LXXXIII.

THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(ALtered from

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER)



43.

6.

360.

maids on each side of me—my feet in the church-doors—and the words “I John take thee Mary” said—if John should boast a favour done by me, I would not wed that year; and you, I hope, when you have spent this year commodiously in atchieving languages, will at your return acknowledge me more coy of parting with my eyes than such a friend. More talk I hold not. Now, if you dare, go.

E. Lov. I dare, you know. First, let me salute you.—
(*kisses her.*)

Lady. Farewel, sweet servant! and your task perform’d on a new ground, as a beginning suitor, I shall be ready to hear you.

E. Lov. Farewel, cruel mistress! (Exit *Lady.*)

Enter *YOUNG LOVELESS and SAVIL.*

Y. Lov. Brother, you’ll hazard the losing of your tide to Gravesend; you have a long half mile by land to Greenwich.

E. Lov. I go: but, brother, what yet unheard-of course to live doth your imagination flatter you with? Your ordinary means are devour’d.

Y. Lov. Course! Why, ’faith, I know of no other but *horse-coursing*. But come, consume no time in this: I have no estate to be mended by meditation; and he that busies himself about my fortune, may properly be said to busy himself about nothing.

E. Lov. Yet some course you must take, which, for my satisfaction, resolve upon. If you will shape none, I must inform you, that the man but persuades himself to live, who imagines not the means.

Y. Lov. O, as for that matter, brother, I can live as well as many a man who calls himself a gentleman does about this great town;—play the best of the game at tennis, billiards, hazard, &c; make my ingenuity my caterer, and my courage my protector; avail myself of the foibles of your honest man, who is too scrupulous to cheat any one but himself; and enter deeply into the spirit of a gambler, who will cheat every body he meets with.

E. Lov. I happily only know enough of such base men to despise them.

Y. Lov. Come, come, sweet brother, be not too cynical. Without such, public places would soon give one the tertian ague. The company of merchant-tailors

would soon lose their best customers, half the pretty women their attending beaux, and the spirit of intrigue be transferr'd from the gentlemen-gamblers to the more sober adventurers on t'other side Temple-Bar.

E. Lov. Well, to keep your feet out of such dangerous paths, I have resolv'd you shall live as master of my house. It shall be your care, *Savil*, to see him fed and cloath'd, not according to his present estate, but to his birth and former fortunes.

Y. Lov. Nay, if it be referr'd to him, if I be not found in coarse worsted stockings, blue devil breeches, and my pockets in the sleeves, I'll never look you in the face again.

Savil. Ay, and a comelier wear it will be, than those dangling slops about you.

E. Lov. To keep you ready to do him all service peaceably, and him to command you reasonably, I leave these further directions in writing, which at your best leisure together, open and read.

[*Exeunt Young Loveless and Savil.*]

Enter ABIGAIL with a Jewel.

Abig. Sir, my mistress commends her love to you in this token, and these words: It is a jewel, she says, which is a favour from her she would request you to wear 'till your year's travel be perform'd; which once expired, she will happily expect your return.

E. Lov. Return my service, with such thanks as she may imagine the heart of a suddenly overjoy'd man would willingly utter; and you, I hope, I shall with slender arguments persuade to wear this diamond in return (*gives a ring*), that when my mistress shall, through my long absence and the approach of new suitors, offer to forget me, you may cast your eye downward to your finger, and remember me.

Abig. O my credit! I think it was made for me, 't fits me so exactly. Fear no suitors, Sir!

E. Lov. I need not instruct you how to discredit their beginning; you know how to take exceptions to them.

Abig. O dear Sir, never fear me! They shall have as many defects as an usurer sees in poverty, or a young girl of sixteen finds in a man of sixty-five.

E. Lov. Farewel! be mindful, and be happy.

[*Exit Elder Loveless.*]

Abig. The gods of the winds befriend you, Sir! and that

that I value you as a constant and liberal lover, pray Heav'n send us many more such !

Enter WELFORD.

Welf. (*Speaking to his servant*) Let 'em not stand still :— we have rid hard to-day.

Abig. A suitor, I know by his riding hard.—I'll not be seen.

Welf. A pretty hall this ! I would look freshly.

Abig. You have deliver'd your errand to me, then ! There's no danger in a handsome young fellow : I'll shew myself. (*comes forward*)

Welf. Lady, may it please you to bestow upon a stranger the ordinary grace of salutation !—Are you the lady of the house ?

Abig. Sir, I am worthily proud to be a servant of her's.

Welf. Lady, I should be as proud to be a servant of your's, did not my so late acquaintance make me despair.

Abig. Sir, it is not so hard to atchieve but nature may bring it about.

Welf. For these comfortable words I remain your glad debtor.—Is your lady at home ?

Abig. She is no straggler, Sir.

Welf. May her occasions permit me to speak with her ?

Abig. If you come in the way of a suitor, No.

Welf. I know your affable virtue will be moved to persuade her, that a gentleman benighted, and stray'd, requests from her hospitality a lodging for to-night.

Abig. I will commend this message to her ; but if you aim at her person, you will be deluded. There are other women of the household of as good carriage and government ; upon any of which if you can cast your affection, they will be found perhaps as faithful, and not quite so coy. [*Exit Abigail.*]

Welf. What a skinfull of frailty have we got here !—I thought I had come a-wooing, and I am the courted party.—Well, this is right court-fashion ! Men, women, and children all woo—Catch that catch may.—If this soft-hearted woman now hath infused any of her own tenderness into her lady, there is some hope I shall have no very arduous task upon my hands.—O, here she comes !

Enter

THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abig. Sir, my lady's pleasure is to see you; and she hath commanded me to acknowledge her sorrow, that you have taken the pains to come up for such bad entertainment.

Welf. I shall obey your lady.—Is this the way?

Abig. It is, Sir. [*Exeunt Abigail and Welford.*]

Scene changes to ELDER LOVELESS's House.

Enter YOUNG LOVELESS and SAVIL with a Writing.

Sav. By your favour, Sir, you shall pardon me.

Y. Lov. I shall beat your favour, Sir!—Cross me no more—I say they shall come in.

Sav. Sir, you forget who I am.

Y. Lov. Sir, I do not. Thou art my brother's steward, his cast-off mill-money, his kitchen-arithmetic.

Sav. Sir, I hope you will not make so little of me.

Y. Lov. I make thee not so little as thou art; for, indeed, there goes no more to the making of a steward, but a fair *imprimis*, and then a reasonable *item* infused into him, and the thing is done.

Sav. Nay, then, you stir my duty, and I must tell you——

Y. Lov. What wouldst thou tell me?—how hops grow, or hold some rotten discourse of sheep, or when our Lady-day falls.—Prithee farewell, and entertain my friends; be drunk, and burn thy table-books; and, my dear spark of velvet, thou and I——

Sav. Good Sir, remember——

Y. Lov. I do remember thee, a foolish fellow; one that did put his trust in almanacks and horse-fairs, and rose by honey and pot-butter.—Shall they come in yet?

Sav. Nay then, I must unfold your brother's pleasure.—These be the lessons, Sir, he left behind him.

Y. Lov. Prithee expound the first.

Sav. (*Reads*) “I leave to maintain my house six hundred pounds a-year, and my brother to dispose of it——”

Y. Lov. Mark that, my wicked steward!—“And I dispose of it.”

Sav. (*Reads*) “Whilst he bears himself like a gentleman, and my credit falls not in him.”—Mark that, my good young gentleman, mark that!

Y. Lov.

Y. Lov. Nay, if it be no more, I shall fulfil it. While my legs will carry me, I'll bear myself gentleman-like; but when I am drunk, let them bear me that can.—Forward, dear steward!

Sav. (*Reads*) “Next, it is my will, that he be furnished as my brother, with attendance, apparel, and the obedience of my people.”

Y. Lov. Steward, this is as plain as your old minikin breeches. Your wisdom will relent now! Will it not be mollified—or—You understand me—Proceed.

Sav. (*Reads*) “Next, that my steward keep his place and power, and bind my brother's wildness with his care.”

Y. Lov. I'll hear no more of this Apocrypha:—bind it by itself, steward.

Sav. This is your brother's will; and as I take it, he makes no mention of such company as you would draw unto you:—swaggering Captains, that know no more of heav'n than their oaths come to;—Travellers, who may have seen Calais in a clear day;—and Poets, who have no more title to that claim, than what tagging of bad rhymes and bespattering good reputations give them:—and then, when they are all met together, they look like so many Carthusians—things without linen. Are these fit company for my master's brother?

Y. Lov. I will either convert thee, O thou pagan steward, or presently confound thee and thy reckonings!—Who's there?—Call in the gentlemen.

Sav. Good Sir——

Y. Lov. Nay, you shall know both what I am, and where I am.

Sav. Are you my master's brother?

Y. Lov. Are you the sage master steward, with a face like an old Ephemeris?

Enter CAPTAIN, TRAVELLER, and POET.

Sav. Then Heav'n keep all, I say!

Y. Lov. Ay, and 'tis well said, my old peer of France!—Welcome, gentlemen—welcome, gentlemen!—Mine own dear lads, you're richly welcome!—Know this old Harry Groat.

Capt. Sir, I will take your love.

Savil. Sir, you will take my purse——

Capt. And study to continue it.

Savil. I do most cordially believe you.

Travel. Your honourable friend, and master's brother, hath given you to us for a worthy fellow; and so we embrace you, Sir.

Savil. Has given himself into the hands of varlets not to be carved out, Sir.—Are these the men?

Y. Lov. They are the Morals of the Age—the Virtues—men made of gold!

Savil. Of *your* gold, you mean, Sir.

Y. Lov. This is a Man of War, and cries, "Go on," and wears his colours——

Savil. In's nose.

Y. Lov. In the fragrant field.—This is a Traveller, Sir, knows men and manners, and has plowed up the sea so far till both their poles have knock'd; has seen the sun take coach, and can distinguish the colour of his horses and their kinds.

Savil. 'Tis much!

Travel. I could be more particular, but for modesty sake——

Savil. Pray, Sir, will you be so kind as to speak for this very modest gentleman?

Y. Lov. Why, so I will, my old Truepenny. Know then, that his first voyage was to the Antipodes, where he saw a cabinet of grave counsellors all *standing upon their heads*, and in this *topsy-turvy* situation regulate the affairs of a great kingdom. At a certain place which shall be nameless, he has seen fine ladies *change their faces* every morning as regularly as their night-clothes; and others so careful of them, as to carry *two* under one hood. The men, too, *shifted sides* with the same facility; and some of them so *often*, as to leave nothing original about them. He has seen a great man's frown convert *vanity* into a *cancer*, and courtiers, *whose bodies and souls were not fellows*: others, whose *stomachs* seemed to crave *every thing*, yet whose *heads* contained *nothing*. But the most extraordinary place he ever was in was, *Hypocrite's Island*, situated *under* the line of *honesty*, and inhabited by a species of animals *half black half white*, who live upon human flesh, and constantly lick the food before they devour it.

Savil. Mercy on me! 'Tis even enough, of all conscience! Sit down and rest you. You are at the end of the world already, if half of this be as he has told you.
Would

Would you had as good a living as this fellow could lye you out of!—He seems to have a most notable gift in't.

Y. Lov. Come, Sir, no reflections. Know these gentlemen for the master-spirits of the age. This (*points to the Captain*) is the modern Achilles;—This—(*points to the Traveller*) tells me what is doing in the globe;—and This (*points to the Poet*) ministers the Muses.

Savil. And you the cloaths, meat, and money. You have a good generation of them!—Pray let 'em multiply; your brother's house is big enough; and, to say truth, he has too much land.—Hang it, dirt!

Y. Lov. Why, now thou art a worthy steward!—Fire off thy annotations and thy rent-books! Thou hast a weak brain, *Savil*, and with the next long bill thou wilt run mad.—Gentlemen, once more welcome to six hundred pounds a-year! We will be freely merry; shall we not?

Capt. Merry as mirth and wine can make us.

Poet. A serious look shall be a jury to excommunicate any man from our company.

Travel. We will not talk wisely neither.

Y. Lov. What think you, gentlemen, of all this revenue in drink?

Capt. I am all for drink.

Travel. I am dry 'till it be so; therefore let us make instant proclamation of it by the sound of flaggons and bottles.

Poet. He that will not rhyme to this, let him live sober, seem wise, and die of the Quorum: nay, he that expects salvation in this wicked world, let him drink; for as *thirst* often kills a man, he *that drinks before he's thirsty*, might save himself from an ignominious death.

Y. Lov. Thou arguest logically, my little Poet; it shall be so.—We'll have it all in drink; let meat and lodging go:—they are transitory, and shew men merely mortal.—Then we'll have wenches, every one a wench, and every week a fresh one: all those we have by warrant, under the title of *things necessary*. Upon this place I ground my claim—"the obedience of my people, and all necessities."—Your opinions, gentlemen?

Capt. 'Tis plain as a pike-staff.

Savil. Good Sir, let me expound it.

Capt. Here be as sound men as yourself, Sir.

Poet. This do I hold to be the interpretation of it. In this

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this word *necessary* is included all that be helps to man.—
Now, as woman was made the first, therefore the chiefest.

Y. Lov. Believe me, 'tis a learned opinion, and in this word, the *obedience of my people*. You, *Savil*, being one, are bound to get me wenches.

Omnes. He is, he is, he is!

Y. Lov. Now, steward, attend us for instructions.

Savil. But will you keep no house, Sir?

Y. Lov. No, Sir, nothing but drink!—Six hundred pounds a-year all in drink.

Savil. O! miserable house! and miserable I that live to see it!—For Heaven's sake, Sir, keep some meat.

Y. Lov. Get us wenches, I say, and do your duty to your master; and as for your part, since you won't join us in drink, I'll board you in an ale-house, where you shall eat cheese and onions.

Savil. What will become of me?—No chimney smoking—no order and regularity!—Well, prodigal, your brother will come home at last.

Y. Lov. Ay, but 'till then, dear steward, let us find ourselves at home; and you, Captain, open the ceremony of our induction.

Capt. With all my heart! And that all men may know us by our 'scutcheon, I ordain that our motto be, *In vino veritas*; and our crest, a bottle couchant.

Omnes. Bravo, bravo, bravo, Captain! [Exeunt.]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T H. S C E N E I.

LADY'S House.

Euter LADY and WELFORD.

Lady. **N**OW, Sir, that you see your bad lodging, I must bid you good-night.

Welford. Lady, if there be any want, 'tis in want of you.

Lady. A little sleep will ease that compliment. Once more, good-night!

Welford. Once more, dear Lady, and then all sweet nights!

Lady. Dear Sir, be short and sweet then.

Welf. Shall the morrow prove better to me? Shall I hope my suit happier by this night's rest?

Lady. Is your suit so sickly, that rest will help it? Pray ye, then, let it rest 'till I call for it.—Sir, as a stranger, you have had all my welcome; but had I known your errand ere you came, your passage had been straighter.—Good-night, Sir! *[Exit.]*

Welf. So fair and cruel! Dear unkind, good-night!

Enter WELFORD'S SERVANT, *drunk.*

Whose head do you carry upon your shoulders, that you jole it so against the post? Is it for your ease, or have you seen the cellar? Where are my slippers, Sir?

Serv. Here, Sir.

Welf. You have got the vertigo, scoundrel.—Have you seen the horses?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Welf. Have they any food?

Serv. 'Faith, Sir, they have a kind of wholesome rushes—hay I cannot call it.

Welf. And no provender?

Serv. Sir, so I take it.

Welf. You are merry, Sir; and why so?

Serv. Because there are no oats to be got, unless you'll have them in the porridge, the people are so mainly given to spoon-meat.—Why, Sir, yonder's a cast of coach-mares belonging to the Gentlewoman, the strangest cattle!

Welf.

14 THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

Welf. How!

Serv. Why, Sir, they are *transparent*, you may see through them!—Then such a house!

Welf. Come, Sir, the truth of your discovery!

Serv. Sir, they are in tribes, like Jews.—The kitchen and the dairy make one tribe, and have their faction and their *love-affairs* within themselves. The buttery and the laundry make another tribe, and there is no love lost. The chambers are entire; but what's done there, is somewhat above my knowledge, Sir; but this I am sure of, that between all parties a stranger is kept virtuous; that is to say, fasting.—But of all things, the drink, Sir!—O lud, the drink!

Welf. Why, what of that?—

Serv. I will handle it as the time and your patience will give me leave. This drink, or cooling julep, of which three spoonfulls kills the calenture—a pint breeds the cold palsy—

Welf. Sir, you belye the house.

Serv. I would I did, Sir! but as I am a true man, were it but one degree colder, nothing but an ass's hoof would hold it.

Welf. I am glad on't; for if it had proved much stronger, you would have been *tongue-tyed* of these commendations. — Light me to bed, Sir; I'll hear no more. [Exeunt.

Scene changes to a Hall in ELDER LOVELESS's House.

Enter ELDER LOVELESS, disguised like a cast-away Mariner.

Elder Lov. So, I am once more returned to my own house, whose hospitable gate seems thrown open to receive all kinds of visitors! Under this disguise I mean to try the affections of my brother and my mistress. Both their hearts, I hope, are worth reclaiming; at the same time that I tremble for the wildness of the one, whose passions get the better of his reason; and for the caprices of the other, who seems to have no passions at all. Who waits there?

Enter a SERVANT.

Conduct me to your master; I would speak with him on urgent business.

Serv. Yes, Sir.

[Exeunt.

Scene

Scene changes. YOUNG LOVELESS and his Companions, (Fiddlers at a distance) seated at Table, Bottles, Glasses, &c.

Omnes. Hah! hah! hah!

Young Lov. Well, but my little Jingle, art not thou afraid, that for these satires and lampoons thou wilt one day have thy bones broken?

Poet. Not at all—the world is more bullied by us than by any other kind of people.—When men are *personally* attacked, they generally can seek *personal redress*;—but we fight in *ambush*, my boy, and can knock down a man's character with a “*we hear*,” and steal away a lady's reputation as easily as “*tis said*.”

Y. Lov. Well, but is not this literary murder?

Poet. Oh! nothing more than *accidental death*. We never mean to injure the particular party, no more than the angler does the individual trout he throws in for; and 'tis with both just as the stream presents them. In short, we poets are caterers for the public taste; and if that is to be fed with nothing but *scandal*, you may as well blame us, as tax a *great man's servants* with luxury, because their master chuses to keep an expensive table.

Capt. 'Pshaw! d—n your scratches upon paper! Give me the scoring on the pate—give me the beat of drums—the dying groans---the cannons roar---with all the circumstance of glorious war.—Apropos! now I think on't, let there be deducted out of our main potation five marks in hatchments to adorn this puissant thigh---fire and smoke will tarnish.

Y. Lov. Thou shalt have it, my Mars, and fly in feather. But come, Jingle, give us your favourite catch; and if thou canst drop *satire* once in thy life, let it be a panegyric upon drinking.

Poet. With all my heart! But first let me prefer the practice to the theory.

Y. Lov. Agreed!--Come, Gentlemen, a bumper toast---

“Here's perpetual banishment to all sobriety.”

Omnes. “Perpetual banishment to all sobriety!”

Poet. And now, Gentlemen, for my catch. (*Sings*)

GLEE.

16 THE CAPRICIOUS LADY.

G L E E.

The Words taken from Dr. HAYES's Collection of Old Glees.

The MUSIC by Mr. ARNE.

NOW jolly we are met,
And our glasses are set,
Let's chace away dull care,
And to drink let's prepare.
Come, my lads, here's a toast full meet :
" Be the great man true, and the true man great."
Then fill a bumper—I see light,
I hate the man who shuns the fight;
For true the maxim is, we repeat o'er the glass,
IN VINO VERITAS.

Enter SAVIL.

O my head, my heart, what a noise, and change is here! He that lives within a mile of this place, had as good sleep in the perpetual noise of an iron-mill. There's a dead sea of drink in the cellar, in which goodly vessels lie wrecked; and in the middle of this deluge appear the tops of flaggons and black-jacks, like churches drown'd in the marshes.

Y. Lov. What, steward! art thou come?—Welcome to Troy, old boy!

Sav. Good Sir, *consider*——

Y. Lov. Shall we *consider*, Gentlemen? How say you?

Capt. Consider! That were a simple toy, i'faith.—*Consider!* Whose moral's that? The man that cries *consider* is our foe: let my steel know him.

Y. Lov. Stay thy death-dealing hand; he must not die yet! Prithee be calm, my Hector.

Capt. Peasant slave! Thou groom composed of grudgings, live, and thank this Gentleman; thou had'st seen Pluto else:—the next *consider* kills thee.

Trav. I never met with such a fellow in *all my travels!* Let him drink down his word in a gallon of sack.

Poet. 'Pshaw! 'tis but a snuff; make it a *couplet*, and let him do it kneeling in repentance.

Sav. Nay, rather kill me; 'tis but a layman lost.—Good Captain, do your office.

Y. Lov.

Y. Lov. Thou shalt drink, steward---drink and dance. Come, strike him a hornpipe, squeakers.

Savil. Lord, Sir! I cannot dance. Pray break my head, and let me go.

Y. Lov. Damn me, Sir, you shall dance and drink, and get drunk and dance, and be drunk again, and shall see no meat in a year-----

Poet. And three quarters.

Y. Lov. And three quarters let it be.—But who comes here?

Enter ELDER LOVELESS.

Savil. Here comes one to deliver me, I hope.

E. Lov. Gentlemen, Heaven save you all! My business is to one Master *Loveless*.

Capt. This is the Gentleman you mean: he's a right one.

E. Lov. He promises no less, Sir!

Y. Lov. (drunk) Sir, your business?

E. Lov. Sir, I should let you know—yet I am loth, but I am sworn to it—Would some other tongue spoke it for me!

Y. Lov. Out with it, in Heaven's name!

E. Lov. All I desire, is the patience and sufferance of a man.—Prithee be not mov'd more——

Y. Lov. Than a bottle of sack will do.—There's my hand. Prithee thy business?

E. Lov. Good Sir, excuse me!—Yet whatsoe'er you hear, be discreet, and bear it nobly.

Y. Lov. 'Psha! prithee dispatch.

E. Lov. Your brother—your brother, Sir, is dead.

Y. Lov. Dead! What! dead-drunk?

E. Lov. No, Sir—dead, and drown'd at sea.

Capt. Art sure he's dead?

E. Lov. As sure, Sir, as I tell it.

Poet. But art thou sure he had water enough to drown him?

E. Lov. Sure, Sir, he wanted none.

Y. Lov. (recovering himself) No, I would not have him want; I lov'd him better.—Here, I forgive thee; and i'faith be plain, how do I bear it?

E. Lov. Very wisely, Sir.

Y. Lov. Come, Sir, sit down (*Elder Loveless sits.*) Fill him some wine!—These transitory toys ne'er trouble me—He's in a better place, my friend, I know it. Some fellows

D

now

now would have cried and curst thee, and fallen out with their meat, and kept a pudder : but all this helps not. He was too good for us, and let heaven keep him ! There's the right use on't, friend. Off with thy drink ! thou hast a spice of sorrow makes thee adry. Fill him another.—*Savil*, your master's dead ! And who am I now, *Savil* ?—Nay, let's all bear it well.—Wipe, *Savil*, wipe ; tears are but thrown away ;—I shall be master now : shall I not, *Savil* ?

Savil. Yes, Sir,—

Y. Lov. And have drink innumerable ?

Savil. Yes forsooth.

Y. Lov. And you'll strain courtesy, and be drunk a little ?

Savil. I would be glad, Sir, to do my weak endeavour.

Y. Lov. You may be brought in time to love a wench too ?

Savil. In time the sturdy oak, Sir——

Y. Lov. Some more wine for my friend there !

E. Lov. I shall be drunk anon for my good news ; but I have a loving brother, that's my comfort. (*aside*.)

Y. Lov. Here's to you, Sir ! This is the worst I wish you for your news ; and if I had another elder brother, and say it were his chance to feed haddocks, I should be still the same you see me now---a poor contented Gentleman. More wine for my friend, there ! He's dry again.

E. Lov. I shall be, if I follow this beginning.—Well, my dear brother, if I 'scape this drowning, 'tis your turn next to sink ; but you shall duck twice before I help you. (*aside*.)—Sir, I cannot drink more ; pray let me have your pardon.

Y. Lov. O Lord, Sir, it is your modesty ! More wine ! Give him a bigger glass ! Salute him, my Captain ; thou shalt be my chief mourner.

Capt. And this my badge of sorrow, Sir ! A full (*holding a glass*) carouse to you, Sir, and to my lord of land here !

E. Lov. I feel a buzzing in my brain ! Pray Heav'n I bear this out, and I'll never trouble them so far again. (*aside*.)—Here's to you, Sir !

Y. Lov. 'Psha ! let's have a parting glass before you go. Come, more wine, ho ! *Savil*, more wine, ho !

E. Lov. I dare not, Sir, by any means.—This only, and farewell (*drinks*) !---Sir, your brother, when the storm was

was most extreme, told all about him he left a will behind him, which lies close behind the chimney in the Matted Chamber; and so, as well, Sir, as you have made me able, I take my leave.

Y. Lov. Let us embrace him all! If you grow dry before you end your business, pray take a bait here. I shall have a fresh hog'shead for you.

Savil. (drunk) You shall neither will nor chuse, Sir. My master is a wonderful fine gentleman; has a fine 'state, a very fine 'state, Sir! I am his steward, Sir, and his man.

E. Lov. Would you were your own, Sir, as I left you! (*aside.*)---Well, I must cast about, or all sinks.

Savil. Farewel!—Gentleman, Gentleman, Gentleman!

E. Lov. What would you with me, Sir?

Sav. Farewel, gentleman!

E. Lov. O sleep, Sir, sleep.

[*Exit.*

Y. Lov. Well, boys, you see what's fallen! Let's in and drink, and give thanks for it.

Sav. And give thanks for it.

Y. Lov. Drunk, as I live, boys!

Sav. Drunk, as I live, boys!

Y. Lov. Why, now thou art able to discharge thine office, and cast up a reckoning of some weight. I will be knighted, for my estate will bear it. 'Tis full four thousand, boys!—Off with your hucks—I'll skin you all in fatten.

Capt. O sweet *Lovelys*!

Sav. All in fatten! O sweet *Lovelys*!

Y. Lov. March in, my noble compeers! and now proceed we to the will. [Exeunt.

Scene changes to MORECRAFT'S House.

Enter MORECRAFT the Usurer, and WIDOW.

Wid. Well, but, Mr. *Morecraft*—

More. Well, but, Widow, I say be your own friend.—Your husband left you wealthy,—aye, and wise. Continue so, sweet duck, continue so. Take heed of young smooth varlets, younger brothers. They are worms that will eat through your bags.—They are lightning, that with a flash or two will melt your money. They are colts, Widow, colts, heady and dangerous, till we take them up, and make them fit for bonds. Look upon me, Wi-

dow! I am none of those flashy, spendthrift young dogs, who run post through their constitution by five-and-twenty, and then can settle nothing but disease and poverty on a wife. I have been as careful of my *health*, as of my *means*; and, tho' a little advanced in life, have enough of both, I hope, to make myself agreeable. But I'll not commend myself.

Wid. Nor I neither, Mr. *Morecraft*.

More. Sweet Widow, leave your frumps, and be edified. You know my 'state. I sell no perspectives, scarfs, gloves, nor hangers, nor put my trust in shoe-ties; and where your husband in an age was rising by burnt figs drudged with meal, and powdered with sugar faunders, and grains, wormseed and rotten raisins, I, in a year, have put up hundreds, inclosed these pleasant meadows by a forfeit mortgage, for which the poor knight takes him a lone chamber, owes for his ale, and dares not beat his hostess.—Nay more——

Wid. Good Sir, no more! Whate'er my husband was, I know what I am; and if you marry me, you must bear it bravely off, Sir.

More. Not with the head, sweet Widow.

Wid. No, sweet Sir, but with *your shoulders*. I must have you dubb'd; for under that I will not stoop a feather. What, if my husband lov'd to toil, fed ill, and made gain his exercise; for all this he left me great wealth, which if you pretend to partake of, you must first be knighted.

More. But why, my dear Widow, stand so much upon Knighthood; a mere paper honour! often *exchanged for honesty*, and as often the *purchase of folly*.—Beside, titles of all kinds have been *so shuffled about of late*, that plain *Mrs. Morecraft* possessed with my lands, is worth an hundred such new-fangled honours.

Wid. What! do you call it nothing to take the lead of most companies one goes into; to have the avenues of all public places echo with the title of *Ladyship*; to have my plate stamp'd with *my Ladyship's arms*, and my cards with *my Ladyship's compliments*?—Fye, Mr. *Morecraft*, where's your spirit?

More. Well, but as I told you before, dear Widow, all this is——(*Enter Savil*)——Oh! who comes here? Whose man are you, Sir?

Sav. Sir, I come from young Master *Loveless*.

More.

More. Be silent, Sir ! I have no money, not a penny for you. He's sunk, your Master's sunk, a perished man, Sir !

Sav. Indeed his brother's sunk a perished man, and drowned at sea ; but for my Master——

More. How saidst thou, good my friend ? his brother drown'd ?

Sav. Untimely, Sir, at sea.

More. And thy young Master left sole heir ?

Sav. Yes, Sir.

More. And he wants money ?

Sav. Yes, Sir ; and he sent me to you, for he is now to be knighted.

More. Widow, be wise ! There's more land coming, Widow ! Be very wise, and give thanks for me, Widow.

Wid. Be you very wise, and be knighted, and then give thanks for me, Sir.

Sav. What says your Worship to this money ?

More. I say, he may have money if he please.

Sav. A thousand, Sir ?

More. Ay, two thousand, Sir, provided, my wife Sir, his lands lie for the payment ; not otherwise.

Enter YOUNG LOVELESS and Comrades with Musicians.

Sav. He's here himself, Sir, and can better tell you.

More. My notable dear friend, and worthy Master *Loveless*, and now right worshipful, all joy and welcome !

Y. Lov. Thanks to my dear Inclosure Master *Morecraft* ! Prithee, old angel of gold, salute my family ; I'll do as much for yours.—'Fore Heav'n, she's a lovely woman ! This, and your own desires, fair gentlewoman !—(*Salutes the Widow.*)

Wid. And yours, Sir, if you mean well.—'Tis a handsome gentleman ! (*aside.*)

Y. Lov. Sirrah ! my brother's dead.

More. Dead !

Y. Lov. Drown'd, drown'd at sea, man ! By the next fresh conger that comes, we shall hear more.

More. Now, by the faith of my body, it moves me much.

Y. Lov. What, wilt thou be an afs, and weep for the dead ? Why, I thought nothing but a general inundation would have mov'd thee ! Prithee be quiet ; he hath left his land behind him.

More.

More. O, has he so?

Y. Lov. Yes, 'faith, I thank him for't! I have all, boy: hast any ready money?

More. Will you sell, Sir?

Y. Lov. No, not outright, good Gripe; but a mortgage, such slight security.

More. I have no money, Sir, for mortgage; but if you will sell all, I'll work a new mine for you.

Sav. Good Sir, look before you; he'll work you out of all else! If you sell all your land, you have sold your country, and then you must to sea, to seek your brother; and there be pickled in a powdering-tub, and break your teeth with biscuits and hard beef, that must have watering, Sir; and where's your six hundred pounds a-year in drink then?

Capt. Steward, you are an afs! a meazled mongrel! and were it not against the peace of my sovereign friend here, I would break your fore-casting, coxcomb! dog! I would, even with thy staff of office there, thy pen-and-ink-horn. Noble boy, take money for thy dirt; sell, and be wise. We are three that will adorn thee, and live according to thine own heart. Mirth shall be only ours, and only ours shall be the black-ey'd beauties of the time. Money makes men immortal.

Poet. Do what you will, 'tis the noblest course; then you may live without the charge of people: only we four will make a family; ay, and an age that will beget new annals, in which I'll write thy life, my son of pleasure, equal to *all the BONS VIVANTS of antiquity.*

Y. Lov. Come, Sir, what dare you give?

Sav. You will not sell, Sir?

Y. Lov. Who told you so, Sir?

Sav. Good Sir, have a care.

Y. Lov. Peace, or I'll tack your tongue up to the roof of your mouth.—What money? Speak.

More. Twelve thousand pounds, Sir.

Capt. Take it! He has overbidden, by this hand! Bind him to his bargain quickly.

Y. Lov. Come, strike my hand with earnest, and draw the writings.

More. There. (*Puts money in his hand.*)

Sav. Sir, for my old master's sake, let my farm be excepted. If I become his tenant, I am undone, my children beggars,

beggars, and my wife—Heaven knows what. Consider me, dear Sir!

More. I'll have all, or none.

Y. Lov. Well, well, thou shalt have all, Old Gripe; therefore go and procure me the angels, and we'll in, and dispatch the writings presently. [*Exit with Companions.*]

Wid. Go to, thou art a pretty fellow! Would thou wert wiser! (*Aside.*)

Sav. Now do I sensibly begin to feel myself a rascal. Would I could teach a school, or beg, or lie well! I am utterly undone! Now he that taught thee to deceive and cozen, take thee to his mercy: so be it! [*Exit.*]

More. Come, Widow, never stand upon knighthood now; we shall soon have that, which will make any knight bow to us, and you be considered greater than any Lady of them all.

Wid. My answer in short is this, Sir: If you mean to make me any thing, it must be a Lady; so therefore remember—No Knight, no Widow; and so I take my leave.

More. Farewel, sweet Widow, and think of it!

Wid. I do more than think of it—I am determined, Sir.— [*Exit.*]

More. She's rich, and sober, if this itch were from her. Now, say I be at the charge to pay the footmen and the trumpets, aye, and the horsemen too, and be a knight, and she refuse me then; why then I am at all this expence for nothing, and shall be laughed at as a coxcomb.—I'll have a care of that.—Twelve thousand pounds—and then the land is mine!—That's some comfort yet:—

For tho' in Love's soft wiles I can't prevail,
The *Morecrafts* in a bargain seldom fail. [*Exit.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

*An Anti-Chamber in the LADY's House.**Enter ABIGAIL, and drops her Glove.*

Abig. **I**F he but follow me, as all my hopes tell me he's man enough, I may hope to draw him on.

Enter WELFORD. (Takes up the glove.)

Welf. This is the strangest pamper'd piece of flesh towards fifty, that ever frailty cop'd withal! Here's dog-skin and perfume now sufficient to kill a hawk! and what to do with it, besides keeping it to shew the mightiness of her palm, I know not. There she is! I must enter into dialogue with her. Lady, you have lost your glove?

Abig. Not, Sir, if you have found it.

Welf. It was my meaning, lady, to restore it.

Abig. 'Twill be uncivil in me to take back a favour fortune hath so well bestow'd. Sir, pray wear it for me.

Welf. I wear two always. 'Faith, let's draw cuts; one will do me no pleasure.

Abig. The tenderness of his years keeps him as yet in ignorance. I must be plainer with him. (*aside.*)

Enter ELDER LOVELESS (disguised as before.)

E. Lov. Save you both!

Abig. And pardon you, Sir! that are somewhat rude. How came you hither?

E. Lov. Why, through the doors; they are open.

Welf. What are you? and what business have you here?

E. Lov. More, I believe, than you have.

Abig. Who would this fellow speak with? Art thou sober?

E. Lov. Yes; I come not here to sleep.

Welf. Prithee what art thou?

E. Lov. As much, gay man, as thou art: I am a gentleman.

Welf. Art thou no more?

E. Lov. Yes, more than thou dar'st be---a soldier.

Abig. Thou dost not come to quarrel?

E. Lov.

E. Lov. Not with women. I come here to speak with a gentlewoman.

Abig. Why, I am one.

E. Lov. But not with one so gentle.

Welf. This is a fine fellow!

E. Lov. Sir, I am not fine yet; I am but new come over; but give me credit with *your* taylor, and then I shall be as fine as you. Lady, if there be a better of your sex within this house, say I would see her.

Abig. Why, am I not good enough for you, Sir?

E. Lov. Your way, you'd be too good.—Pray end my business.—This is another suitor: O frail woman! (*aside.*)

Welf. This fellow with his bluntness hopes to do more than the long suits of a thousand could.—Tho' he be sour, he's quick: I must not trust him. (*aside.*)---Sir, this Lady is not to be spoken to by such as you.—You smell as if you were new calk'd! Go and be clean, and then you may sit with her serving-men.

E. Lov. What are you, Sir?

Welf. Guess by my outside.

E. Lov. Then I take you, Sir, to be some new silken Thing wean'd from the country, that shall (when you come to see good company) be beaten into better manners. Pray, good proud gentlewoman, help me to see your Mistress.

Abig. How many lives hast thou, that thou talkest thus rudely?

E. Lov. But one: I am neither cat nor woman.

Welf. And will that one life, Sir, maintain you in such bold sauciness?

E. Lov. Yes, amongst a nation of such men as you are, and be no worse for wearing. Shall I speak with this Lady?

Welf. No, by my troth shall you not.

E. Lov. I must stay here then.

Welf. That you shall not neither.

E. Lov. Good *fine* Thing, tell me why?

Welf. Good *angry* Thing, I'll tell you: this is no place for such companions. Such scurvy gentlemen shall find their business better i'the suburbs: there your strong pitch perfume mingled with lees of ale shall reek in fashion. This is no Thames-street, Sir.

Abig. This gentleman informs you truly. Prithee be satisfied, and seek the suburbs, good *Captain*, or whatever title else the warlike Eel-boats have bestow'd upon thee.

E

Go

Go and reform thyself, and know; my Lady speaks with no such swabbers.

E. Lov. Goto—I have found you: and for you, Sir, whose tender gentle blood runs in your nose, and makes you snuff at all but *Things* like yourself; I let you know, he that begat your Worship's sattin suit can make no men. Sir, I will see this Lady, and, with the reverence of your Silkenship, in these old garments too.

Welf. You will not, sure?

E. Lov. Sure, Sir, I shall.

Abig. You would be beaten out.

E. Lov. Indeed I would not; or if I would be beaten, pray who's to beat me? This good Gentleman looks as if he were o' th' peace.

Welf. Sir, you shall see that: will you get out?—

E. Lov. Yes, that which shall correct your boy's tongue. Dare you fight? I will stay here still. (*They draw.*)

Abig. O lud! lud! their swords are out! Help! help! for Heaven's sake! Madam! my Lady! Why, who's within there?

Enter LADY.

Lady. Who breeds this rudeness?

Welf. This uncivil fellow. He says, he comes from sea; where I believe h'as purged away his manners.

Lady. Why, what of him?

Welf. Why, he will rudely, without once asking leave, press to your presence, and no denial must stand between your person and his business: I pass by his ill language.

Lady. Sir, have you any business with me?

E. Lov. Madam, some I have, but not so serious to pawn my life for it. If you keep this quarter, and maintain about you such Knights of the Sun as this is, to deny men of employment to you, you may live—but in what fame?

Lady. Pray stay, Sir; who has wrong'd you?

E. Lov. Wrong me he cannot, though uncivilly he flung his wild words at me; but to you, I think, he did no honour, to deny the haste I came withal to bear a message to you, though I seem coarse.

Lady. Excuse me, gentle Sir; it was without my knowledge, and shall have no protection.---And to you, Sir, (*addressing herself to Welford*) you have shew'd more heat than wit, and from yourself have borrow'd power I never gave you here, to do these vile unmannerly things.

If

If your love consist in fury, carry it to the camp; and there, in honour of some common mistress, shorten your youth: I pray be better-temper'd, and give me leave a while.

Welf. You must have it. [*Exeunt Welford and Abigail.*]

Lady. Now, Sir, your business?

E. Lov. First, I thank you for schooling this young fellow; and next, I should rail at you, but you are a woman, and anger's lost upon you.

Lady. Why at me, Sir? I never did you wrong; for to my knowledge this is the first time I ever saw you.

E. Lov. You have done that, I must confess, I have the least share in, because the least acquaintance; but there be (if there be honour in the minds of men) thousands, when they shall know what I deliver (as all good men must share in't), will to shame blast your memory for ever.

Lady. How is this, good Sir?

E. Lov. 'Tis that which if you have a soul will choak it. -- You've killed a Gentleman.

Lady. I kill'd a Gentleman!

E. Lov. You and your cruelty have kill'd him, Lady, and such a man (let me be angry in it) whose least worth weigh'd above all women's virtues that are. I spare you all to come; guess him now.

Lady. I am so innocent I cannot, Sir.

E. Lov. Repent, you mean: you are a perfect woman, and, as the first, was made for man's undoing.

Lady. Sir, you have miss'd your way: I am not she.

E. Lov. Would he had miss'd his way too, though he had wandered farther than women are ill spoken of, so he had miss'd this misery!

Lady. Pray to your purpose! Whither would ye, Sir?

E. Lov. You had a lover that your peevishness enjoin'd to travel.

Lady. Such a one I have still, and I shall be griev'd 'twere otherwise.

E. Lov. Then have your asking, and be griev'd; he's dead: but how you will answer for his worth I know not.

Lady. Dead!

E. Lov. He was a man I knew but in his evening. Ten furs after, forc'd by a tyrant storm, our beaten bark bulg'd under us, in which sad parting-blow he call'd upon his faint, but not for life, on you, unhappy woman; and whilst all sought to preserve their lives, he desperately em-

brac'd a wave, crying to all that saw it, "If any live, go to my Fate that forc'd me to this untimely end, and make her happy." His name was *Loveless*. I 'scap'd the storm, and now you have my business.

Lady. 'Tis too much. Wou'd I had been that storm, he had not perish'd! Sir, if you will rail now, I will forgive you; or if you'll call in more, if any more come from his ruin, I shall justly suffer what they can say: I confess myself a guilty cause in this. I would say more, but grief is grown too great to be delivered. (*Weeps.*)

E. Lov. I like this well. These women are strange things (*aside*)!---'Tis somewhat of the latest now to weep; you should have wept when he was going from you, and chain'd him with those tears at home.

Lady. Would you had told me then so, these two arms had been his sea!

E. Lov. Trust me, you move me much; but say he liv'd, these were forgotten things again.

Lady. Ay, say you so? Sure I should know that voice! This is knavery---I'll fit you for it. (*aside*).---Why, were he living, Sir, I would persuade you to be charitable, aye, and confess we are not all so ill as your opinion holds us, O my friend, what penance shall I pull upon my faults, upon my most unworthy self for this?

E. Lov. Leave to love others: 'twas some jealousy that turn'd him desperate.

Lady. Are you wrung there? I'll be with you straight. (*aside*.)

E. Lov. This works amain upon her. (*aside*.)

Lady. I do confess there is a Gentleman has borne me long good-will---

E. Lov. Ha! what's that? (*aside*.)

Lady. And vow'd a thousand services to me, regardless of him. But since Fate, that no power can withstand, has taken from me my first and best love, and to weep away my youth is a mere folly, I will shew you what I determine, Sir: you shall know all. Call Mr. *Welford* there! That Gentleman I mean to make the model of my fortunes, and in his chaste embraces keep alive the memory of my lost lovely *Loveless*:---he is somewhat like him too, I think,

E. Lov. Then you can love?

Lady. Yes, certainly, Sir, though it please you to think me hard and cruel: I hope I shall persuade you otherwise.

E. Lov. I have made myself a fine fool! (*aside*.)

Enter WELFORD.

Welf. Would you speak with me, Madam?

Lady. Yes, Mr. *Welford*; 'twas to ask your pardon before this Gentleman for being so froward. I do sincerely hope henceforth we may live with more affection.

E. Lov. So it were better I was drown'd indeed! (*aside.*)

Welf. This is a sudden passion: Heav'n hold it! This fellow out of his fear, sure, has persuaded her. I'll give him a new suit on't. (*aside.*)

Lady. Hum! You look as if you wish'd to kiss my hand: You shall, Sir.—You now know my mind, good Sir; let me pray you to wait me in the gallery.

Welf. I am in another world! O dear Madam, wherever you please. [*Exit.*]

E. Lov. I will to sea, and it shall go hard but I'll be drowned indeed! (*aside.*)

Lady. Now, Sir, you see I am no such hard creature, but time may win me.

E. Lov. You have forgot your lost love?

Lady. Alas! Sir, what would you have me do? I cannot call him back again with sorrow; I'll love this man as dearly; and beshrew me, I'll keep him far enough from sea. 'Twas told me, now I remember me, by an old wise woman, that my first lover should be drowned; and see how 'tis come about.

E. Lov. I would she had told you your second should be hang'd too, and let that come about!—But this is very strange!

Lady. Faith, Sir, consider all, and then I know you'll be of my mind. If weeping would redeem him, I would weep still.

E. Lov. But say that I were *Loveless*, and 'scaped the storm, how would you answer this?

Lady. Why, for that Gentleman I would leave all the world.

E. Lov. That young Thing too?

Lady. Yes, that young Thing too, or any young Thing else; I for him would lose my state.

E. Lov. Why then, he lives still; I am he, your *Loveless*!

Lady. Alas! I knew it, Sir, and for that purpose prepared this pageant. Get you to your task, and leave these players

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players tricks, or I shall leave you; indeed I shall. Do travel, or know me not.

E. Lov. Will you then marry?

Lady. I will not promise. Take your choice. Farewel!

E. Lov. Sure there is no other purgatory but woman! I must do something yet, or perish in th' attempt. By Heav'n, I will.—Well—no matter what, but you shall hear of it, and feel it to the quick. [Exit Loveless.]

Enter WELFORD.

Welf. Madam, I am bold—

Lady. You are indeed!

Welf. You so overjoyed me, Lady!

Lady. Take heed you surfeit not, pray! Fast and welcome.

Welf. By this light, you love me extremely.

Lady. By this light, and to-morrow's light, I care not for you.

Welf. Come, come, you cannot hide it.

Lady. Indeed I can, where you shall never find it.

Welf. I like this mirth well, Lady.

Lady. You shall have more on't.

Welf. I must salute you.

Lady. No, Sir.

Welf. Indeed I must.

Lady. What must be must be: then take your parting-blow. (*gives him a box on the ear.*) I pray commend me to those few friends you have that sent you hither, and tell them when you travel next, 'twere fit you brought less bravery with you, and more wit; you'll never get a wife else.

Welf. Are you in earnest?

Lady. Yes, 'faith.---Ho! who's within there? Bring out the Gentleman's horses, he's in haste; and set some cold meat on the table.

Welf. I have too much of that, I thank you, Lady, already.

Lady. Farewel, young man!

(Exit Lady.)

Welf. Yes, you have made me one with a witness! Why, fare you well, proud woman! and may the curse of a great house, I mean the Butler, fall upon thee!--The Devil and all his works are in these women. Would all men were of my mind! I would make 'em a new Lent, and a long one too, that lovers might be in more reverence with them.

Enter

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abig. I am sorry, Mr. *Welford* —

Welf. So am I, that you are here.

Abig. How does my Lady use you?

Welf. As I would you, scurvily.

Abig. I should have been more kind.

Welf. Nay, then I should be undone.---Prithee leave me.
---Hark, doesn't your Lady call?

Abig. Sir, if she does, I may borrow so much time without offence.

Welf. 'Pshaw! for Heavn's love leave me; you're nothing but offence.

Abig. I don't know how my good-will (if I had said *love*, I lied not) should any way deserve this treatment.

Welf. A thousand, thousand ways.---Sweet creature, let me depart in peace!

Abig. What creature, Sir? I hope I am a woman.

Welf. Oh! an hundred, I think by your noise.

Abig. If you were a Gentleman, I should know it by your gentle conditions. Are these fit words to give a gentlewoman?

Welf. As fit as if they were made for you; but since you will not leave me, I must e'en leave you.---Sirrah, my horses there! and so farewell, old Adage! *(Exit.*

Abig. The blessings of a prodigal young heir be thy companions, *Welford*! Marry come up, my Gentleman! are your gums grown so tender they cannot bite? A skittish filly be thy fortune, and fair enough for such a pack-saddle, and I doubt not, if my aim hold, to see her fling thee with a vengeance, *Master Welford*! *[Exit.*

Scene changes to LOVELESS'S Houſe.

YOUNG LOVELESS with MORECRAFT at Table, with Bottles and Glasseſſes and Parchments before them: SAVIL at a Distance.

Y. Lov. Come, to business.---Where's Sir Savil?

Sav. Here, Sir.

Y. Lov. Are your keys ready? I must ease you of your burden.

Sav. I am ready to be undone, Sir, when you shall call me to it.

Y. Lov. Come, come, *Savil*, don't despair, you shall live better, man.

Sav. Why yes, Sir, as far as fasting will go, I shall certainly be the better man.---Lord! what will become of my

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my poor family ! They are no sheep, and they must keep themselves.

Y. Lov. Away !—thou'rt rich in ornaments of nature. — First, in thy face. Thou hast a serious face ; a betting, bargaining, saving face ; a rich face——pawn it to the Usurer—; a face to kindle the compassion of the most ignorant and frozen Justice.

Sav. Aye, 'tis such as I shall not dare to shew it presently.

Y. Lov. Be blithe and bonny, steward !—Master *Morecraft*, drink to this man of reckoning.

More. Here's e'en to thee, then !

Sav. The Devil guide it downward !—Would there were in it an acre of the great broom-field you bought to sweep your dirty conscience, or choak you, 'tis all one to me, Usurer.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A lady, Sir, desires to speak with you.

Y. Lov. O, shew her in by all means ! Business is always the better for a woman.

Enter WIDOW. (*Morecraft goes to the table, and writes.*)

Y. Lov. My sweet Widow, welcome ! You are happily come to receive the keys, and free possession of this house, while I stand by to ratify.

Wid. Hearing what you were about, I came (standing upon no ceremony) to dissuade you from it ; therefore take care, Mr. *Loveless*, of what you are doing.

Y. Lov. O, 'tis past that, Widow !—Come, sit down, whilst I surrender that to you, which I esteem more than house and lands :—it is my heart, sweet Widow.—Is it fit one of such tenderness, so delicate, so contrary to things of care, should stir and break her meditations in the bare brokage of a brace of angels ? Say, can you thus bow below your blood and beauty to be a partner of this fellow's bed ? If you can, I will not press you further. Yet look upon him ! There's nothing in that hide-bound Usurer, that man of mat, that all-decrepid, but aches for you to love, unless his perish'd lungs, dry cough, or scurvy.

Wid. To be plain, Mr. *Loveless*, I no more like these qualities than those of *prodigality*.—But say, should I place my affections on you, what can I expect, but that you, who

who are for parting with every thing, should in turn part with me too?

Y. Lov. Sooner with my eyes, dear Widow.—No, you shall stand in aid of all my wants, and, being perfect mistress of my heart, shall instruct it at your will.—But who comes here? By Heaven, it is my brother!

Enter ELDER LOVELESS.

Eld. Lov. By your leave.

Y. Lov. (Confused.) By my troth, Sir, you are welcome—welcome, i'faith!—Pray know this Gentleman (*introducing him to Morecraft*). We are but merry! You see the worst on it—your house has been kept warm, Sir.

Eld. Lov. I am glad to hear it, Brother: pray Heav'n you are grown wise too!

Y. Lov. Pray, Mr. *Morecraft*, know my eldest brother.—*Savil*, I dare swear, is glad to see you. Lord, Sir, we heard you were drown'd at sea, and see how luckily things come about!

Morecraft. (whispering Y. Loveless.) The money must be paid again.

Y. Lov. Not a stiver, good Encloser; let each keep what they have;—I keep the money, and you the sale; it will make good taylor's measures.

Wid. By my troth, he has stew'd him in his own sauce! I shall love him the better for it as long as I live.

Sav. I know not where I am, I am so glad. Your Worship is the welcomest man alive; upon my knees I bid you welcome home. Here has been such a hurry, such a din, such dismal swearing and drinking, that I am almost mad! We have all lived in one scene of confusion; but, blessed be Heaven that sent you safe again to us! now I shall eat, and go to bed again.

Eld. Lov. Brother, dismiss this fellow.

Y. Lov. Mr. *Morecraft*, you had better go.—Time was when you cozen'd me;—now we are both quit.

Wid. Better and better, still.

Eld. Lov. What is this fellow, brother?

Y. Lov. The thirsty Usurer that supp'd my land off.

Eld. Lov. And what does he tarry for?

Y. Lov. Only to sup your's off in the same way. I was bold, Sir, to make a little sale.

F

More.

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More. Am I over-reach'd?—Well, if there be law, I'll hamper ye.

Eld. Lov. Prithee begone, and rail at home! Thou art so base a fool I cannot laugh at thee.—This comes of cozening, firrah! Home, and spare, and eat raddish 'till you raise your sums again! If you stir further in this, I'll have thee whipt, your ears nail'd for intelligence on the pillory, and your goods forfeit. — Go, you stale cozeners, leave my house!

More. A plague upon your house!—Come, Widow, I shall yet hamper this young gamester.

Wid. Good Twelve-i'the-hundred, keep your way; I am not for your diet. — Marry in your own tribe, Jew, and get a broker.

Y. Lov. 'Tis well said, Widow! Will you now jog on, Sir?

More. Yes, I will go; but 'tis no matter whither: but when I trust a wild fool and a woman, may I lend gratis and build hospitals! [Exit.]

Eld. Lov. Well, brother, you see your mirth has been a little interrupted; I am not *foused for Ember-week yet*.

Y. Lov. Pardon me, dear brother, my faults and indiscretions, which this Lady has already given me a glimpse of, but which from this hour I fly from as from a pestilence.

Eld. Lov. Well, brother, for this Lady's sake, I'm willing to set down your extravagance to want of thought, and your brutality to drunkenness; therefore, madam, if he be deserving of your love, he shall not fail for means.

Wid. Sir, you speak so much like a worthy brother, and so much credit do I give your fair language, that I shall love your brother for your sake: at present, I should blush to say more.

E. Lov. Stop her mouth then, brother; (Young Loveless kisses her) and when you are next chid, let it be by your fair Mistress. I will instruct her in it: so take care you don't deserve it.

Y. Lov. This goodness so overpowers me, that trust me, Sir, if you can believe a reformed man, whose vice at worst was not *lying*, I have a thousand times more heart-felt pleasure in your being thus reformed to me, than, without you, all your fortune could bestow.

E. Lov.

E. Lov. I am inclined to believe it.—But what shall I say to you, *Savil*? You're from my steward become first your own drunkard.

Sav. Good Sir, consider whom you left me to!

E. Lov. I left you as a curb, not to provoke my brother's follies. Where's the best drink now? Come, tell me, *Savil*, where's the best ——— O ye old he-goat! ye dried ape! must you have these doings in my house?

Sav. Good Sir, forgive me, and but hear me speak!

E. Lov. Methinks thou shouldst be drunk still, and not speak; 'tis the more pardonable.

Sav. I will, Sir, if you will have it so.

E. Lov. I thank you, yes;—e'en pursue it, Sir.—Do you hear? I shall deliver these keys to one shall have more honesty, though not so much fine wit. Sir, you may walk and gather cresses, fit to cool your liver. There's something for you to begin a diet! Speed you well, Sir *Savil*! You may eat at my house to preserve life; but there ends your pleasure, my *good* and *faithful* steward.

[*Exeunt Omnes præter Savil.*]

Sav. Now must I hang myself, my friends will look for't. Eating and sleeping, I despise you both now!

I will run mad first; and if that beget not pity,
I'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty. [*Exit Savil.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

F

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in the LADY'S House.*ABIGAIL *sola.*

Abig. **A**LAS, poor gentlewoman! to what a misery hath age brought thee!—to what a scurvy fortune! thou that hast been a companion for noblemen, and at the worst time for gentlemen!—Now, like a broken serving-man, am I obliged to beg for favour to those who would have crawl'd like pilgrims to my chamber, but for an apparition of me. Here was a face! *Ecce signum!* But Time, that like a surfeit eats our youth (plague upon his iron teeth, and draw 'em for it!) has been a little bolder here than welcome.—Well, you that be coming on, take warning, make much of fifteen, and so on till five-and-twenty!—It is the summer of life; and she that won't make hay while the sun shines, can't expect to come in for her share of the harvest.

*Enter LADY and MARTHA.**Lady.* Well, *Abigail*, what news of *Loveless*?

Abig. I hear, Madam, he has been clearing his house of all his brother's led-captains and drunken companions.—I'm sure my heart bleeds for the poor gentleman, when I think what a scurvy time he has on't, between your cruel usage of him and his brother's vagaries. Lord, Madam, I could no more use a gentleman so that lov'd me, than I could fly!

Mar. I dare swear, *Abigail*, thou wert tender-hearted in thy youth.

Abig. As to matter of youth, Madam, I hope I shall be always *tender-hearted* even to my grave; for when one considers, Madam, that there are but the *two sexes* in the world, Madam, and that no woman has a lease of her life, and that we are all bound to be charitable,—why surely *one's duty*, Madam, should oblige one to be a little more *sociable* and tender-hearted.—Then Mr. *Loveless*, Madam, is a—

Lady. Hush! he's here!—(*Enter E. LOVELESS*)—How dare you, being so unworthy, presume to come into my presence more?

E. Lov. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Lady. What ails the fellow ?

E. Lov. The fellow comes to laugh at you.—I tell you, Lady, I would not for your land be such a coxcomb, such a whining afs as you descried me for when I was last here.

Lady. I joy to hear you are wise ; 'tis a rare jewel in an Elder Brother !—Pray be wiser yet.

E. Lov. Methinks I am very wise !—I do not come a-wooing ; indeed, I'll move no more love to your ladyship.

Lady. What makes you here then ?

E. Lov. Only to see you and be merry, Lady ; that's all my business.—Faith, let's be very merry !—Come, an hour or two well spent in wholesome mirth, is worth a thousand of these puling passions ! 'Tis an ill world for lovers.

Lady. They were never fewer.

E. Lov. I thank Heav'n, there is one the less for me, Lady !

Lady. You were never any, Sir.

E. Lov. Yes, I was ; but now I am the most indifferent fellow in the world.—Lord ! how I lov'd this woman ! how I worshipp'd this pretty calf with a white face here ! As I live, you were the prettiest fool to play withal, the wittiest little varlet !—It would talk, Lord, how it talk'd !—And when I anger'd it, it would cry out, and scratch, and eat no meat, and it would say, “ Go hang.”

Lady. It will say so still, if you anger it.

E. Lov. And when I ask'd it if it would be married, it sent me of an errand into France, and would abuse me, and be glad it did so——

Lady. Sir, this is most unmanly ! Pray begone.

E. Lov. And swear, even when it twitter'd to be at me, I was unhandsome.

Lady. Have you no manners in you ? Pray, Sir, no more ; 'tis almost dinner. I know they stay for you at the ordinary.

E. Lov. E'en a short grace, and then I am gone.—You are a woman, and the proudest that ever lov'd a coach ; the scornfullest, absurdest, and most capricious woman ; the greediest to be prais'd and never satisfied, though it be gross and open ; the most envious, that at the poor fame of another's face would eat your own, and more than is your own, the paint belonging to it ; of such a self-opinion, that you think none can deserve your glove ; and for your malice,

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malice, you're so excellent, you might have been your Tempter's tutor.—Nay, never cry.

Lady. Your own heart knows you wrong me.—I cry for you! (*weeps.*)

E. Lov. You shall before I leave you.

Lady. Is all this spoken in earnest?

E. Lov. Yes, and more, as soon as I can get it out.

Lady. Well, out with it.

E. Lov. You are—Let me see—

Lady. One that has used you with too much respect.

E. Lov. One that has used me, since you will have it so, the basest, the most *foot-boy* like, without respect of what I was, or what you might be to me.—You have used me as I would use a jade, ride him off his legs, then turn him to the common. You have used me with discretion, and I thank ye.—If you have many more such pretty lovers, pray build an hospital, and when they are old keep 'em for shame.

Lady. I cannot think yet this is serious.

E. Lov. Will you have more on't?

Lady. No, 'faith, there's enough of it; if it be true, too much. You are no lover, then?

E. Lov. No, I had rather be a carrier.

Lady. Why, then Heav'n mend all!

E. Lov. Neither do I think there can be such a fellow found i'th' world, to be in love with such a froward woman. If there be such, *Jove* comfort him! O 'tis brave to be one's own man! I can see you now as I would see a picture; sit all day by you and never kiss your hand; then hear you sing, and never fall backward; but with as set a temper as I would hear a fiddler rise and thank you. I can now keep my money in my purse, and, what's more, thank Heav'n! retain my own senses.

Lady. The carriage of this fellow vexes me.—Sir, pray let me speak a little in private with you. I must not suffer this—one serious word or two.

E. Lov. Ha! ha! ha! what would you with me?—But come, you will not ravish me? Now for your set speech?

Lady. Thou perjur'd man!

E. Lov. Ha! ha! ha! this is a fine exordium!—And why, I pray you, perjur'd?

Lady. Did you not swear a thousand, thousand times, you lov'd me best of all things?

E. Lov. I do confess it; make your best of it.

Lady.

Lady. Why do you say you do not, then?

E. Lov. Nay, I'll swear it, and give sufficient reason—
your own usage.

Lady. You do not love me, then?

E. Lov. No, 'faith.

Lady. Did you ever think I lov'd you dearly?

E. Lov. Yes, but I see but scurvy fruits on't.

Lady. Do not refuse your hand, for I must take it, and
with it my last farewell.—Now let me die, so you be hap-
py! (*Elder Loveless gives his hand carelessly.*)

E. Lov. I have gone too far.—*Lady!* speak, dear
Lady! (*she appears ready to swoon.*)

Lady. No, let me die——(*she swoons.*)

Mar. O my sister!

Abig. O my *Lady!* Help! help!

Mar. Run for some hartshorn—quick! quick, I say!

E. Lov. Oh! I have play'd the afs here most egregi-
ously!—Bend her body forward.—*Lady!* best, dearest,
worthiest lady! hear your real lover. I am not as I seem-
ed.—O wretched fool, to throw away the jewel of my life
thus!—Give her more air.—See, she begins to stir!—
Sweet Mistress, hear me!

Lady. Is my *Loveless* well?

E. Lov. In being your's I am so.

Lady. Then I care not.

E. Lov. How do ye?—I confess my fault not pardonable
in pursuing thus upon such tenderness my wilful error: but
had I known it would have wrought thus with you, not
the world could have won me to it. O I could curse my-
self for this folly!—Pray smile upon me!—Upon my faith,
'twas but a trick to try you, knowing you lov'd me dearly;
and yet strange that you would never shew it, though my
behaviour to you was all humility.

All. Ha! ha! ha!

E. Lov. How now?

Lady. I thank you, fine fool, for your most fine plot.
This was a subtle one; a rare device to have caught dot-
trels with.—Good senseless Sir, could you imagine I
should swoon for you, knowing you to be such an arrant afs?
ay, a discover'd one?—Now we are quits!—I thank you,
Sir.—Ha! ha! ha!

Mar. Take heed, Sir, she may chance to swoon again.

All. Ha! ha! ha!

Abig. Step to her, Sir; see how she changes colour.

E. Lov.

THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

E. Lov. I'll go to hell first, and be better welcome !--- I am fool'd, I do confess it ; finely fool'd, Lady-fool'd, Madam, and I thank you for it.

Lady. 'Faith, 'tis not so much worth, Sir ! But if I know when you come next a-birding, I'll have a stronger noose to hold the woodcock.

All. Ha ! ha ! ha !

E. Lov. I am glad to see you merry. Pray laugh on.

Mar. She had a hard heart, that could not laugh at you, Sir !---Ha ! ha ! ha !

Lady. Pray, Sister, do not laugh ; you'll anger him, and then he'll rave like a mere Billingsgate.

E. Lov. I will not rail.

Mar. 'Faith, then, let's hear him, Sister.

E. Lov. Yes, you shall hear me.

Lady. Shall we be the better by it, then ?

E. Lov. No ; he that makes a woman better by his words, I'll have him fainted : blows will not do it.

Lady. By this light, he'll beat us.

E. Lov. You deserve it richly, and may live to have a Beadle do it.

Lady. Now he rails.

E. Lov. Come, scornful Folly, if this be railing, then you shall hear me rail.

Lady. Pray put it in good words, then.

E. Lov. The worst are good enough for such a trifle, such a proud piece of cobweb lawn.

Abig. Lord ! we had best muzzle him ; he grows mad, Ma'am.

Lady. Are you well, Sir ?

Mar. He looks as though he had a grievous fit o'the colic.

Abig. I'll heat a trencher for him.

E. Lov. Do, dirty December, do ! Thou Thing, that ten years since hast left off to be a woman, pray go fetch a trencher, go.

Lady. Let him alone, he's crack'd !

Abig. I'll see him hang'd first. He's a beastly fellow to use a woman of my breeding thus, ay, marry is he. Gad, would I were a man, I'd make him eat his knave's words !

E. Lov. Tie your she-otter up, good Lady Folly ! And for you, Madam, that your Ladyship may know in what base manner you have us'd my service, I do from this hour hate you heartily ; and though your folly should whip you
to

to repentance, and waken you at length to see my wrongs. 'Tis not the endeavour of your life shall win me; so farewell!--When I am married, and made sure (which now I'm determin'd shall be shortly), then I'll come and visit you again, and vex you, Lady. By all my hopes, I'll be a torment to you, worse than a tedious winter! I know you will recant, and sue to me; but save that labour: I'll rather love a fever and continual thirst; rather contract my youth to drink and swagger, doat upon quarrels, or take up with the first unhappy woman in the street, than be drawn to love you more.

Lady. Ha! ha! ha!--pray do.

E. Lov. From Thee, false Dice, Jades, Cowards, and capricious Women, good Heav'n deliver me!

[*Exit Elder Loveless.*]

Lady. But hark you, *Loveless*, harkee!--Is he gone? Call him again.

Abig. Hang him, Padock.

Lady. Art thou here still? Fly, fly, and call him! Fly, or never see me more.

Abig. I had rather knit again, than see that rascal; but I must do it. [*Exit Abigail.*]

Lady. I would be loth to anger him too much!--What fine foolery is this in women, to use those men most forwardly they love most! If I should lose him thus, I were rightly serv'd. I hope he's not so much himself to take it to heart!--How now? Will he come back?

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abig. Never, he swears, while he can hear men say there is any woman living. He swore he would have me first.

Lady. Didst thou intreat him back?

Abig. As well as I could, Madam: but this is still your way, to love being absent, and when he's with you, laugh at him and abuse him. There is another way, if you could hit on't.

Lady. Thou say'st true. Get me paper, pen, and ink; I'll write to him directly. I'd be loth he should sleep in his anger. Women are most fools, when they think they are wisest. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes. Enter YOUNG LOVELESS, CAPTAIN, and POET.

Capt. Well, but, my gallant *Loveless*, tho' thy brother be
G come

come home, and hath resumed his fortune, marriage will cure all again. There's no fear of the Widow's husband returning to life again.

Poet. Yes, yes, Marriage will cure all again; and thanks to our most excellent *Lady Grocer*, for giving us such good *reasons* to be merry!

Y. Lov. Why, 'faith, Gentlemen, I must join you in the general mirth; for our most excellent *Lady Grocer*, as you call her, hath not only made me merry, but wise. In short, she has shewn me the end of my line, and happily has taught me to barter folly---for reflection.

Poet. (*whispering to the Captain.*) What does he mean by Reflection?

Capt. D-mn me, if I know!--I never made use of such a word in all my life.

Poet. Well, noble *Loveless*, you are pleas'd to be merry, we see?

Y. Lov. Why yes, Gentlemen, merry in fort, but not mad. There was a time I could be the latter; but the full moon, that then influenced my understanding, is now on its wane, and I am just as I should be.

Capt. and Poet. Explain---explain---my noble *Loveless*!

Y. Lov. Why, as thus: Born with strong passions and a good constitution, they played into each other's hands against my reason---my fortune furnished them with the means:---but just before the game was up, this charming Widow betted on my side, turned the luck against my adversaries, and thus I recovered my original stake.

Capt. Z--nds! I don't well understand this lingo.

Poet. I fear we're all aground, Captain! (*aside*)---Well, but, my noble *Loveless*, you don't mean to forsake us? Consider, we have been your dearest friends.

Y. Lov. Aye, but you see the dearest friends must part. Come, come, you have had your turn out of me long enough, in all conscience! It is but looking out for such another fool as I have been; and sure, Gentlemen, you cannot pay so fashionable a town as this is, so ill a compliment, as to think you'll long want a choice.

Capt. Prithee, my noble *Loveless*, do but consider!--We are undone, if you desert us.

Y. Lov. For shame, Captain! If you have the courage you pretend to, carry it to the camp; your country demands it, and will pay you nobly for it. If it is but pre-

tence

tence (as I have strong reason to think it is), you must take it to other markets—the *Stews* and *Gaming-houses*. There you will meet with those to whom the consciousness of *deserving chastisement* will make the counterfeit pass for the reality.—As to you, my little Poet, who seem to be born for the age you live in, the World, I dare say, will do you more justice; for since your fraternity have shortened the road to fame by pulling down the merit of others to their own level, the Worshipful Company of Scribblers cut no inconsiderable figure in the great Corporation of Knaves and Fools.

Capt. So, so, 'tis all over, I see!—D-mn me, this comes of following Younger Brothers; fellows who are often as much obliged to live by their wits as other people!

Poet. This plot thickens too soon, Captain!—We must lay our next deeper.—Adieu *Loveseys*! (*Exit with Captain.*

Y. L. Farewel, my once noble compeers; and as I have met with my reformation, may ye as speedily meet with your deserts!—

Enter Widow.

Wid. So, Mr. *Loveseys*, I saw your companions on the stairs! They look'd rather moodily, methought, and seemed to cast their eyes upon me as the cause of their ill-temper.

Y. Lov. Thou hast guess'd right, my sweet Widow!—A man going into bondage like me, having no occasion for a train, I took the liberty of discharging my supernumerary attendants.

Wid. I should be sorry, Sir, to break in upon your pleasures.

Y. Lov. Thou wert born to heighten them, my sweet Widow; and 'tis with shame I now reflect, ever to have called my former follies by that name.

Wid. But art thou sure now, thou wilt never relapse, and find thyself again mistaken!

Y. Lov. O! never after recovering a surfeit!—It is your sickly appetite that finds a novelty in variety; but your man of experience knowing how unhealthy it is, sits down pleased with the wholesomeness of a good single dish, and sticks to it to the end of his life.

Wid. If I was but sure now, that you would constantly observe this regimen—

44 THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

Y. Lov. You being the physician, how can you doubt it?

Wid. O, I do not doubt the goodness of my prescriptions! But may not you, like a spoiled child, refuse the physic, tho' it be administered to you for your own good?

Y. Lov. Never, when it comes from so fair and kind a hand! Besides, I have so long experienced what it was to be ill, that I shall now be the more guarded against a relapse.

Wid. Well, I find I must trust to those promises; and as you have cured me of the folly of knighthood, I am the more apt to flatter myself, I might have cured you of the follies of *variety* and *dissipation*.

Y. Lov. Why, this is as it should be!—a free confession on both sides, and the only way to make our union lasting.—As for my part, *I'm determined to be happy*; and when once a man takes up seriously this resolution, it is hardly in the power of accidents to thwart it.

Wid. I will not promise so stoutly, but hope to learn obedience from my husband.

Y. Lov. Here, then, let me sign and seal (*kisses her hand*),

And thus my liberty resign;
My greatest happiness to call you mine.

[*Exeunt*,

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V. S C E N E I.

ELDER LOVELESS.

THIS senseless woman vexes me to the heart!—She will not from my memory.—If I had been unhand-some, old, or jealous, now, I should not blame her for thus scorning me. But to be young—and, by this light, I think as proper as the proudest—means and manners equal to the best Sir of the kingdom, her conduct the more perplexes me. But hold! Is not my conduct equally as perplexing, that I should daily suffer by this temper, and yet daily bear it? If I have no security for her constancy before marriage, what right have I to expect it afterwards?—Reason thus cries out against the trial—aye;—but Love, impetuous Love hurries me to go on; and glossing over every indignity her whim imposes on me, makes me sacrifice this boasted reason to the blind suggestions of a fond foolish heart.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, there's a Gentleman without would speak with you.

E. Lov. Bid him come in.

Enter WELFORD.

Welf. By your leave, Sir.

E. Lov. You are welcome! What's your will, Sir?

Welf. Have you forgot me?

E. Lov. I do not much remember you.

Welf. You must, Sir, if you can remember any thing. I am that Gentleman you was pleased to insult in your disguise. I have enquired you out.

E. Lov. I was disguised indeed, Sir, if I insulted you. Pray where, and when?

Welf. In a certain Lady's house:—I need not name her.

E. Lov. I do remember you now!—You seemed to be a suitor to that lady?

Welf. If you remember this, do not forget how scurvily you used me. That was no place to quarrel in. Pray you think of it. If you be a man of honour, you dare fight without further provocation,

E. Lov.

E. Lov. Why, Sir, I dare fight, but never for a woman. ---I will not have her in my cause.---She's mortal, and so is not my anger. If you have brought a nobler subject for our swords, I am for you, but in this I would not prick my little finger. And when you said I wronged you, 'tis so far from my principle, that amongst the catalogue of my fears, to do a wrong is the greatest. But if you will listen to experience, trust me, that tho' you throw yourself into as many dangers for this woman as she offers; though you redeem her lost name every day, and find her out new honours with your sword; you shall, after all, be but her mirth, her laughing-stock, as I have been.

Welf. Sir, I ask your pardon!---I came to resent my own quarrel, not the Lady's. But since you have thus explained yourself, so far from quarrelling, I would rather join with you in being revenged of her.

E. Lov. What! Have you given up all hopes of her, then?

Welf. Oh! entirely. I soon found she but trifled with me, and paid my addresses where they were more favourably received.

E. Lov. To whom?

Welf. To her sister.

E. Lov. And would you seriously wish to wed her?

Welf. Most certainly. Yet if her sister's consent could be obtained, so much the better; as, in point of fortune, she in a great measure depends upon her bounty.

E. Lov. A sudden thought strikes me!—Do but follow my counsel, and I trust we shall both bring about our purposes.—The means are these——

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Sir, there's a Gentlewoman below would needs speak with you.

E. Lov. 'Sdeath, you blockhead!—why did you let her in?

Serv. Sir, she said, she had very particular business with you; and as I did not know your Worship's occasions, Sir,—I—I—

E. Lov. Pshaw! 'tis my mistress's woman.—You must not be seen.—Yet hark in your ear (*to Welford*): Dispatch this business first, and when I see you, I'll let you into the whole of my project—(*to the Servant*) Shew her up.

[*Exit Servant.*

Welf,

Welf. I like it much, and will about it straight; and trust me, tho' I came here your enemy, the superior injuries you have suffered from this changeling woman, binds me to you as a friend.

E. Lov. Away—away—she must not see you! (*Exit Welford*)—Well, my female envoy, what news with you?

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abig. Pray leave these frumps, and receive this letter.

E. Lov. From whom, good Vanity?

Abig. 'Tis from my Lady.—Alas, good soul, how she cries and takes on!

E. Lov. Does she so, good soul?—And so she has sent you, as her orator, to persuade me to come again! And suppose I won't come again, what wilt thou say to that?

Abig. Nothing, Sir.

E. Lov. Art thou a woman, and say nothing?

Abig. Except you hear me with more moderation.---I can speak wise enough.

E. Lov. And loud enough, I warrant you.---Will your Lady love me?

Abig. It seems so by her letter and her lamentations.---But you are such another man!

E. Lov. Not such another as I was, Mumps, nor will be.---I'll read her fine epistle, tho' (*reads*).---Hah! hah! hah! is not thy mistress mad?

Abig. Aye, you may well say so.---Trust me, 'tis a shame you should use a poor Gentlewoman so untowardly. She loves the ground you tread upon; and you, hard heart, because she jested with you, mean to kill her.---'Tis a fine conquest indeed! Well, if my Lady die, I'll be sworn before any jury in Middlesex, thou art the cause of her death.

E. Lov. Deliver to your Lady from me this: I mean to see her, if I have no other business (which before I will want to come to her, I mean to go seek birds-nests); yet I may come too:---'till then farewell, old Adage! and tell your mistress, I hope to see her as old and as much forgotten as thy reverend Ladyship.

Abig. Thou art a vile ungrateful man, and Heaven will one day overtake thee for such blasphemy! [*Exeunt.*]

Scene

Scene changes to the LADY's House.

Enter LADY alone.

Lady. Is it not strange that woman's will should thus trace out new ways to disturb herself!--If I should call my reason to account, it cannot answer why I keep myself from mine own wish, and stop the man I love from his, and every hour repent again, and yet go on.--O woman, woman! what art thou? Men, you must answer this, that dare obey such things as we command. Well, *Abigail*, what news?

Enter ABIGAIL.

Abig. 'Faith, Madam, nothing worth the telling.

Lady. Is he not come?

Abig. No truly.

Lady. Nor has he writ?

Abig. Not a line, Madam---not so much as a syllable.---
Ah! pray Heaven you have not undone yourself!

Lady. Why, what says he?

Abig. 'Faith, he talks strangely.

Lady. How strangely?

Abig. First, at your letter, Madam, he laughed extremely.

Lady. What in contempt?

Abig. Oh monstrously! as if he would crack his sides; and when you wrote it, I think you was in no such merry mood, Madam. Then having done, he cried, "Alas!" and laughed again.

Lady. Did he?

Abig. Yes, till I was angry.

Lady. Angry! Why? And why wert thou angry? He did but well; I did deserve it.---He would have been an unfit man for any one to love, had he not laughed thus at me.---You were angry!---That shewed your folly. I shall love him more for that, than all he did before.---But said he nothing else?

Abig. Many uncertain things he said.---"Though you had mocked him, because you were a woman he could wish to do you so much favour as to see you;" yet he said, "he knew you rash, and was loth to offend you with the sight of one whom now he was bound not to leave."

Lady. Ah! what one was that?

Abig.

Abig. I know not; but truly I do fear there is a match making up there: for I heard the servants, as I passed by, whisper some such thing; and as I came back through the Hall, there was such a hurly-burly of Clerks, and Parchments, and Conveyancers, and what not, that I am morally certain the wedding-night can't be far off.

Lady. It is very like, and fit it should be so; for he does think, and reasonably think, that I should keep him with my idle tricks for ever from his happiness.

Abig. At last he said, it should go hard with him, but he would see you, for your satisfaction.

Lady. I now begin to feel the full extent of all my folly. Pray Heaven, it be not too late to recover him!

Enter MARTHA.

Mar. Sister—sister!—Yonder's your lover, and a Gentlewoman with him—

Lady. Where?

Mar. Close at the door, in a coach.

Lady. Alas, I'm undone; I fear he is betrothed already. What kind of woman is she?

Mar. A most ill-favoured one, if I may judge from her person. As to her face, it is masked; but how that may mar or mend the rest, I know not.

Lady. But yet her mind was of a softer mould than mine.—O sister, sister! if e'er that tender name was dear to you, fly to him this moment, and say I conjure him, by all he once felt for me, to see him instantly.

Mar. Your commands, my dear sister, are always absolute with me; but I fear your design is now hopeless.

[Exeunt Martha and Abigail.]

Lady. (sola) Heavens! How this capricious humour of mine has fooled me! It has ever been the greatest bar to my happiness, cross me in the tenderest points, and now, I fear, has for ever lost me the only man upon earth I could love.—But hold, my heart, he's here!

Enter ELDER LOVELESS.

Eld. Lov. Well, Madam, what would you with me?

Lady. Why, whither are you going?

Eld. Lov. To church, Madam.

Lady. What to do?

Eld. Lov. Only to be married, Madam.

H

Lady.

50 THE CAPRICIOUS LADY:

Lady. To whom?

Eld. Lov. To one whom you shall never know till she is my wife, which I hope will be in half an hour: so, good Lady Whimsical, if you have any thing to say to me, be brief, as a parson and a licence wait for us in the church, and 'tis now near the canonical hour.

Lady. Give me but one hearing first; and tho' I have hitherto acted unworthy of myself and you, as I look for mercy, what I now utter shall be from my heart.

E. Lov. Well well what do you mean?

Lady. Was I not once your mistress?

Eld. Lov. O! I see 'tis upon the old string; so, Madam, I humbly take my leave. Experience may perhaps teach you to behave more honestly to your next lover; if not, your Ladyship will stand a good chance to lead apes in t'other world: but as for my part, I'm determin'd to be no longer one of 'em in this. *(offers to go.)*

Lady. Yet hear me out!—I would fain know how you can excuse yourself in taking this lady for your wife, and leaving me?

Eld. Lov. Why?—Deserves she not more than you? For tho' she cannot swoon in jest, nor set her lover talks to shew her own capriciousness and his affection, yet she has such virtues as must ensure her happiness and mine.

Lady. What virtues?

Eld. Lov. Hear them, for your instruction.—*Imprimis*, she loves me; and here is laid the foundation of our mutual happiness: Secondly, she has a mind as free from whims and fashionable follies, as it is stored with good sense, reading, and reflection: Thirdly, she can be content with the fortunes of her husband; and (such is the witchery of affection!) prefer a cottage and solitude with him, to courts, cities, and affluence, without him. And for all those good and amiable qualities, the business of my life shall be to make an adequate return; to anticipate every wish of her heart, and procure her all that happiness which gratitude, affection, and duty, can inspire.

Lady. Heaven knows how much all these were my sentiments, however the waywardness of my temper might have obscured them!—Yet grant that this lady were far beyond me in all respects, does that give you a licence to forswear yourself?

Eld. Lov. Forswear myself? How!

Lady.

Lady. Perhaps you have forgotten the innumerable oaths you have uttered in disclaiming all wives for me.—But I'll not remind you of them—Heaven give you joy!

Eld. Lov. Nay, but conceive me: the *intent* of oaths is ever understood.—Admit I should protest to such a friend to see him at his lodgings to-morrow, divines would never hold me perjured, if I was struck blind, or he hid where my diligent search could not find him. Can it be imagined, then, that I meant to force you into marriage, and to have you whether you would, or not?

Lady. Alas, you need not! I here make a ready tender of myself, and then you are forsworn.

Eld. Lov. Some sin, I see, must necessarily fall upon me (as whosoever deals with women shall never utterly avoid it); yet I would choose the least ill, which is to forsake *you*, who would have done me all those injuries, and kept me prating about marriage 'till I was past the enjoyment of it, rather than *her*, who hath forsaken her family, and put her person and reputation in my hands.

Lady. Which of us swore you first to?

Elder Love. Why, to you.

Lady. Which oath is to be kept, then?

Elder Love. I prithee do not urge my sins unto me, unless I could amend them.

Lady. Why, so you may, by wedding me.

Elder Love. But how satisfy my word to her?

Lady. By explaining to her your prior obligations to me; by pointing out the crime of taking a perjured man to her arms; and the little prospect of mutual happiness when the heart has been previously engaged.

Elder Love. By Heaven, I shall do a most wicked thing now, to desert this woman thus! Yet hear me one word more, which, by all my hopes, I ne'er will alter. I did make an oath this morning, when you fooled me so, that I would be married this night.—Now this my oath I am determined to keep; so that if you will go without delay with your own minister to your own chapel, I'll wed you instantly.

Lady. Agreed!

Elder Love. You pledge your word?

Lady. I do, by every hope of peace here, and hereafter.

Elder Love. Without equivocation?

Lady. May Heaven so deal with me, if I recant!

Elder Love. Why, then, as this tedious Comedy of Per-

plexities is drawing towards a conclusion, 'tis fit the principal actors should make their appearance: therefore, enter my Lady-Wife that was to be, and you that are now to be my Lady-Sister.

Enter WELFORD (disguised like a Woman), MARTHA, and ABIGAIL, who come forward.

Lady. Heavens! what do you mean?

Elder Love. Be not surpris'd, my dear Lady!—When your ambassadrefs, Mrs. *Martha*, inform'd me of your proposals for peace, I took the liberty of introducing my plenipotentiary here into your antichamber, in order to be ready for forcing the treaty, if requisite; the preliminaries of which being now agreed on, I hope you'll think she comes in good time to ratify.

Lady. You speak in riddles.

Welford. Let me explain them. Hearing of Mr. *Loveless's* prior obligations to you, I thought I should be a partner in his perjuries to detain him longer from your arms.—Here, then, I resign him to you with all the liberality of a miser, *not having the least occasion for him myself.* [Unmasks.]

All. *Welford!*—Ha! ha! ha!

Welford. Even he!—a little in disguise or so at present, but I shall soon be my own man again.

Lady. What, *Welford!*—and am I thus tricked again?—Well, I am determin'd to be even with you.

Elder Love. Why, sure you will not dare break the solemn vow you made me just now?

Lady. No—I'll take more ample revenge on you by keeping it, and giving up a war, which, like many a potentate, I have got nothing by, but the disgrace of acting a part I am both heartily ashamed and tired of.

Elder Love. Here, then, let me ratify this long sought-for peace [*kisses her hand*]! and may this, and this [*kisses her hand again*], be all the discord that our hearts shall know! But, *Welford*, how shall I reward you for the part you have taken in my happiness?

Welford. By using your interest for me with this lady [*taking Martha by the hand*]; for as I have been the means of providing for one sister, I would wish to proceed in the good cause, and make provision for the other.

Lady. What, so sudden a change of affection, Mr. *Welford!*

Welford. Not at all, Madam.—Tho' I came to solicit
your

your hand in the beginning, I soon found from your treatment of me, your heart had been placed upon another: I therefore turned my affections here [*bowing to Martha*], where I found more favour.

Lady. Well, sister, what say you?

Martha. 'Tis even as the gentleman has told you, sister; and to speak truth, he has shewn himself, upon the present occasion, so valuable a friend to you, that I hope I shall run no risk in making him your brother.

Lady. Take him, then; and to shew you I consider myself under obligations to you both, tho' our parents made some difference in our fortunes, I mean to make yours equal to my own.

Elder Love. I shall love you the better for this generosity as long as I live.—But who comes here?—My brother, by this light; and with him the fair Widow.

Enter YOUNG LOVELESS, the WIDOW, and SAVIL.

Well, brother, you seem pleased! How is it with you?

Young Love. As well as it should be with a man upon his wedding-day.—Please to know this lady [*presents the Widow*], who is the happy occasion of my good looks.

Elder Love. Why, then, you are come in a critical time to join us in a *matrimonial trio*, as I have at last found this lady in tune, and *Welford* undertakes to play second fiddle.

Young Love. A match, then! and the sooner we begin the concert the better.—But what's your business here, *Savil*?

Savil. Nothing, Sir, except it be to eat—my dancing-days are over.

Elder Love. What art thou now, then?

Savil. Why, Sir, if you consider me in little, I am—with your Worship's reverence—a rascal;—one that upon the next anger of your Worship must raise a scone upon the highway and sell switches.—My wife is learning now to weave incle.

Elder Love. What dost thou mean to do with thy children, *Savil*?

Savil. My eldest boy is half a rogue already—an attorney has taken him 'prentice; and that, your Worship knows, is the first step.—My youngest I purpose binding to a gaoler;—so that, between the two, they may shew us mercy in their functions.

Elder Love. Your family, I see, is quartered with discretion,

Young

Young Love. Aye, this is your drinking and wenching, *Savil!*—I told you of it, but your heart was hardened.

Savil. 'Tis true, you were the first that told me of it: I do remember yet in tears you told me, "you would have wenching;" and in that passion, Sir, you broke out thus: "Repent, and brew three strikes more in a hoghead; 'tis noon ere we be drunk now, and the time will tarry for no man."

Young Lov. I see misery can clear your head better than mustard.—But come, I'll be a suitor for your keys again.—Brother, you must grant them. I do confess I led him first astray, and it is but justice I should replace him in his former station.

Elder Love. Brother, 'tis granted. In this general holiday it would be too much to have one discontented mind; so take your keys again, Sir.—But harkee, *Savil!* leave off the motions of the flesh, and live honest, else you shall graze again.

Savil. I humbly thank your Worship; and if ever I be taken drunk or wenching, take off the biggest key in the bunch, and open my head with it.

Elder Love. Come, my sweet bride, the evening passes! Let's in to chapel.—*Welford*, take care of my Lady-Sister there; and you, brother, bring up your fair Widow in the rear; for tho' we have been crossed in the beginning of our revels,

————the wedding-night

Has pleasures yet in store, to set all right.

THE END.

EPILOGUE,

Written by G. COLMAN, Esq.

AND SPOKEN BY

MRS. A B I N G T O N.

IN FLETCHER's days it was the fav'rite plan
Of Woman, to dethrone the tyrant Man.
Our modern fashions vary; yet their aim,
Howe'er pursu'd, appears the very same.
The starch ruff'd Maidens of Queen *Bess's* reign
Were doom'd a starch demeanor to maintain.
Quill'd up like porcupines, they shot their darts,
Slaughter'd whole rows of Knights, and wounded hearts:
Their virtue nought could shake, no siege could alter;
A rock, impregnable as *Gibraltar*!
In vain were sighs, and tears, and idle flattery;
Their red-hot balls laid low each hostile battery;
While they, bright stars, above all weak comparison,
Shone forth the female *ELIOTS* of the garrison.

The modern Maiden finds things alter'd quite;
A hundred Dangers, not one faithful Knight.—
Nor coy nor cruel, all her charms display'd,
Coldly she's seen, and trusting she's betray'd:
Unfeeling Coxcombs scorn the Damsel's power,
And pass in *Rotten-Row* the vacant hour.
The Fair, her power thus lost in single life,
Reserves her policy 'till made a Wife.
The humble married dames of FLETCHER's day
Thought Wives must love, and honour and obey:
Bound in the nuptial ring, that hoop of gold
Enchain'd their passions, and their will controul'd.
Too oft the modern Miss, scarce made a bride,
Breaks out at once all insolence and pride:
Mounted in phaeton, she courts the eye,
And eats, and games, and paints, and dresses high;

Who

E P I L O G U E.

Who shall say nay? Content to drink and play,
His Lordship cries, "My Lady, take your way!
"I've fixt your Box at th' Opera: but am vext
"That *Polly Brilliant* cou'd not get the next."

Such was the rigid line of antient rule,
And such the freedom of the modern school!
Chuse which, ye Fair; or else, to copy loth,
Compose a new *Pasticcio* out of both;
Or, smit with nobler pride, on Nature look,
And read the brightest pages of her book.

Wou'd you a spotless Maid, chaste Wife be known,
Shew the young Virtues ripening, or full blown,
Mark how they prop and dignify the Throne!
Rival their goodness with a loyal strife,
And grace with royal virtues private life.



